■ **News / A6**

GMA suggests to Mike A to stop denture-cataract missions

■ **World / A12**

Grenade reportedly thrown at President Bush in Tbilisi, Georgia

■ **Metro / A21**

New drug mix of sedative and shabu could be fatal to users, says PNP

■ **News / A2**

President Arroyo to raise VAT rate to 12% next year

■ **Across / A17**

Unpaid bills delay funeral of broadcaster Klein Cantoneros

Ex-coconut authority chief to run P140-B coco levy but...

By Christine O. Avendaño

A NEW MAN has been named to take over the state-run trustee of the P140-billion coconut levy fund, and it appears to be good news for farmers' groups.

President Macapagal-Arroyo yesterday announced that Danny Coronacion would replace

EX-COCONUT/ A8

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER
BALANCED NEWS, FEARLESS VIEWS

Advice for threatened newsmen: Ask NPA's help

JOURNALISTS, who get death threats but don't trust the military, could enlist the help of the communist New People's Army, for their security, an official of the Kapisanan ng mga Brodkaster ng Pilipinas

ADVICE/ A20

SINO'NG KALABAN? SINO'NG KAKAMPI?

email: feedback@inquirer.com.ph
Thursday, May 12, 2005 ★★ 52 pages / 5 sections / Vol. 20 / No. 153 P18
website: www.inq7.net

Publisher shot dead

Duque named new DOH chief

Critics cite his misuse of funds

By Christine O. Avendaño

FRANCISCO Duque III, the president and CEO of Philippine Health Insurance Corp. (PhilHealth), was appointed yesterday to replace Health Secretary Manuel Dayrit, who resigned the other day to become a commissioner of the World Health Organization.

President Macapagal-Arroyo announced Duque's appointment as health secretary even as she sought to squelch speculations that appointments to her Cabinet were a matter of political payback.

It's a comeback for a Duque at the helm of the health department. The incoming health secretary's father and namesake served as President Diosdado Macapagal's health secretary in the '60s.

Migrante, a militant group of overseas Filipino workers, said Ms Arroyo had rewarded Duque with the health portfolio for helping out in her campaign in last year's presidential election. At least 4 million PhilHealth cards bearing Ms Arroyo's photo were distributed to indigents during the presidential campaign.

"It (Cabinet reorganization) is a continuing thing," Ms Arroyo said at a press conference in Malacañang.

Asked about Press Secretary Ignacio Bunye's disclosure early this week that she was considering appointing one or two of her political allies who lost in the 2004 elections, Ms Arroyo replied that she was "not ready to announce them now."

"I don't appoint as a matter of political payback. I appoint as a matter of what I need for governance, she stressed.

DUQUE/ A8

ALICIA RAMOS SLAY

'It's impossible for her to be the mastermind'

By Margaux C. Ortiz, Armand Nocum, Tarra V. Quismundo and Nikko Dizon

UNBELIEVABLE. Incredible.

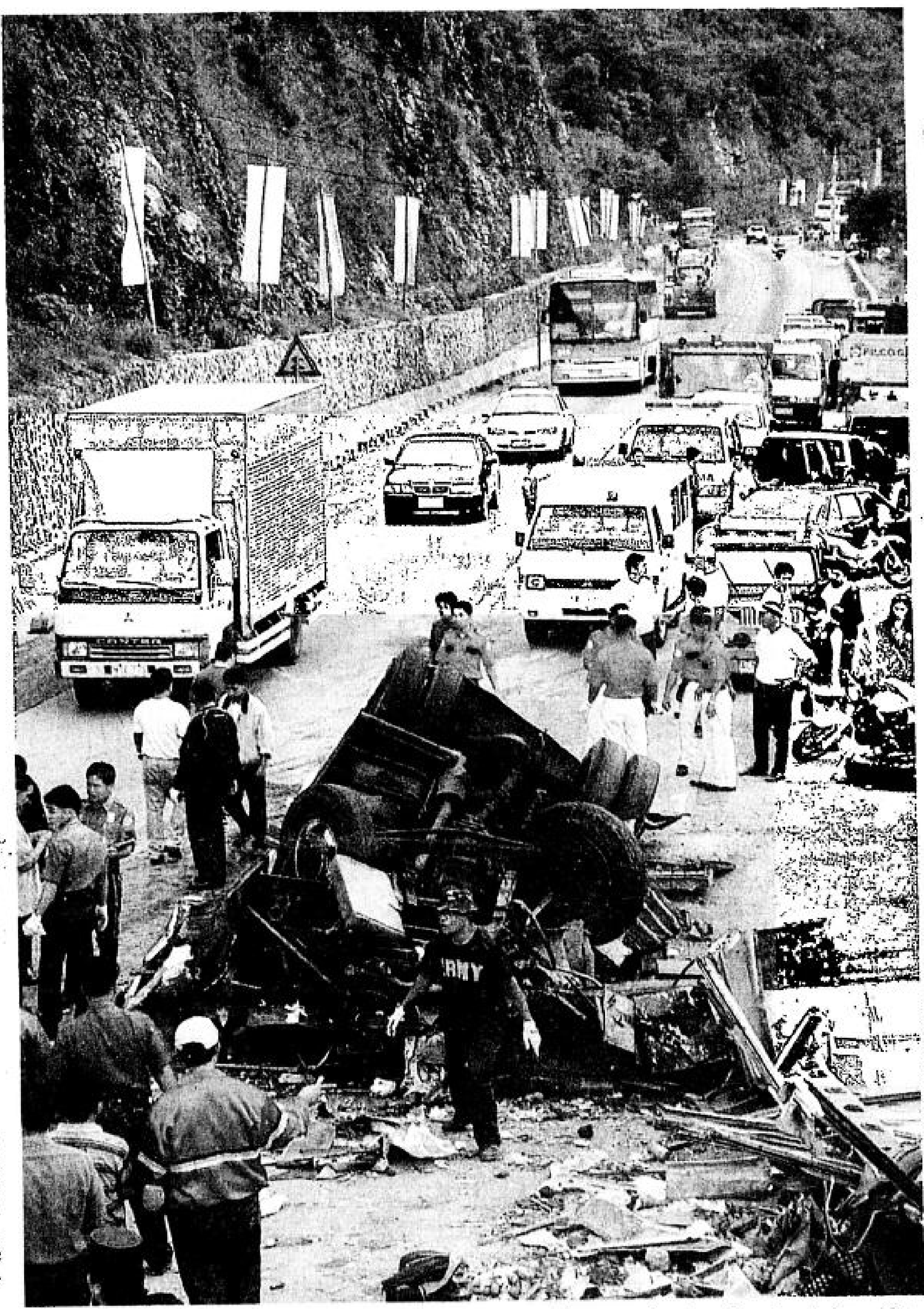
This was how the doctor of Ester Ramos-Bailey reacted to reports that his patient had been tagged as the mastermind in the killing of her sister, Assistant Foreign Secretary Alicia Ramos.

Dr. Rene Yat, a psychiatrist at the St. Claire Medical Center in Makati, immediately rushed to the National Bureau of Investigation yesterday when he learned that Ester had been implicated to explain to authorities her real medical condition.

"It was impossible for her to be the mastermind" as she was incapable of giving orders, Yat said.

Yat, who has been the 65-year-old Ester's physician since 2001, said Ester was "highly intelligent" but unfortunately has had a long history of mental illness.

IT'S IMPOSSIBLE/ A10



TOOTS SOBERANO/PDI NORTHERN LUZON BUREAU

CRUMPLED mess of metal is all that remains of the Byron bus which was coming down from Baguio bound for Pangasinan when it skidded off the Marcos Highway in Badiwan, Tuba, Benguet, before crashing into a boulder. The Benguet police say that a faulty engine possibly caused the driver to lose control of the passenger bus.

27 killed in Benguet bus crash

By PDI Northern Luzon Bureau

TUBA, Benguet—Farmer Sergio Biala, a 60-year-old cancer patient, never thought it would be his last chemotherapy session in Baguio City.

He was on his way home to his family in Mangaldan, Pangasinan, when the bus he was riding in crashed into a roadside boulder along the Marcos Highway in Barangay Badiwan here at 11 a.m. yesterday.

Biala and 26 other passengers were killed. Seventeen others, including three children, were hurt.

More than 20 minutes after it left Baguio for Dagupan City, the Byron Bus Line bus developed mechanical trouble, turned turtle and hit the boulder along an embankment of the highway. The brakes failed, according to the Office of Civil Defense (OCD) in the

27 KILLED/ A10

Sixth RP journalist killed in 5 months

By Tonette Orejas
PDI Central Luzon Desk

CITY OF SAN FERNANDO—Philip "Apê" Agustin, publisher-editor of Starline Times Recorder, took the last bus from Cabanatuan City and arrived in his hometown, Dingalan, Aurora, at about 8 p.m. Tuesday.

On that trip, he carried at least 500 copies of his newsweekly's special edition on the alleged missing funds, relief goods and logs in Dingalan, which was hit by flash floods and landslides last year that left 135 people dead and 56 missing.

Almost four hours later, Agustin, 54, was shot dead in the house of his daughter in Purok Mulawin in the coastal village of Paltic.

Agustin was the 69th Filipino journalist killed since 1986, according to records of the National Union of Journalists of the Philippines.

He was the sixth journalist slain this year after Edgar Amoro (Feb. 2 in Pagadian City), Arnulfo Villanueva (Feb. 28 in Naic, Cavite), Romeo Sanchez (March 9 in Baguio), Marlene Esperat (March 24 in Tacurong City) and Klein Cantoneros (May 4 in Pagadian City).

Because of the killings, the New York-based Committee to Protect Journalists (CPJ) said in a report on May 3 that the Philippines had become the most murderous country for journalists since 2000.

Agustin's daughter, Roseville Cruz, said she was serving her father dinner at past 11 p.m. when the attack took place.

"I was scooping rice from the pot. [My father] was standing [behind me] in the kitchen, near the sala. After I heard the gunshots, I saw him sprawled on the floor," Cruz said.

She said she did not see the assailants of his father, a widower.

Dingalan Councilor Valentino Lapuz, the last local official who met Agustin that night in Cruz's house, said he was walking barely 50 meters away from the house

PUBLISHER/ A20

REM ZAMORA

VALEDICTORY. Before his three-year tour of duty ends tomorrow, US envoy Ricciardone says a mouthful on the prospects of terrorism in the South Wednesday at the Foreign Correspondents Association of the Philippines.

Ricciardone: Cotabato doormat for terrorists

By Nikko Dizon

BASED ON US intelligence, Cotabato is being used as a "doormat" for terrorists, outgoing US Ambassador Francis Ricciardone said yesterday.

Ricciardone said this to explain the US suspension of a road project that would traverse Cotabato City, and which was to be launched last month.

"Cotabato has been becoming a gateway for investment and trade, and business of all legitimate source. But in recent months, we've also heard that it is being used as a doormat by some killers," Ricciardone said during the Foreign Correspondents' Association of the Philippines (Focap) press conference in Makati City.

RICCIARDONE/ A8

184 Oakwood soldiers ordered released

By Dona Z. Pazzibugan

A PLEA bargain yesterday brought to a sudden end the 17-month court-martial of 184 enlisted men who took part in the coup attempt at the Oakwood Premier Ayala Center in Makati on July 27, 2003.

The soldiers—whose ranks ranged from master sergeant to private—pleaded guilty to three charges of disrespect and insubordination, and the main charge of mutiny was dropped.

After an hourlong break, the five-member military tribunal presided over by Col. Jose Recuenco issued its sentence on the soldiers: demotion by three ranks, forfeiture of two-thirds of their basic salaries for three to six months, and confinement with hard labor for a year.

But after defense lawyers pointed out that the soldiers had been detained for a year and 10 months, Recuenco announced without consulting the other members of the tribunal: "Appropriate recommendation to the convening authority (Armed Forces Chief of Staff

184 OAKWOOD/ A20

OAKWOOD OK. Enlisted men who participated in the 2003 rebellion staged at the Oakwood hotel in Makati City cheer when the military tribunal, which had dropped mutiny charges against them, recommended that they be freed immediately.

VAL HANDUMON

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WEATHER FORECAST

FORECAST: Northern Luzon will experience cloudy skies with rainshowers and thunderstorms. Visayas and Mindanao including Palawan will experience mostly cloudy skies with scattered rainshowers and thunderstorms. The rest of the country will be partly cloudy to at times cloudy with isolated rainshowers or thunderstorms in the afternoon or evening.

COMPILED BY ERIKA SARMIENTO, PDI RESEARCH/05/12/05 SOURCE: PAGASA

Metro Manila	Partly Cloudy	Iloilo/Bacolod	Partly Cloudy
Baguio	Partly Cloudy	Roxas	Partly Cloudy
Tuguegarao	Cloudy with Rains	Cebu	Cloudy with Rains
Laoag	Cloudy with Rains	Tacloban	Partly Cloudy
Clark Zone	Partly Cloudy	Gen. Santos	Cloudy with Rains
Tagaytay	Partly Cloudy	Zamboanga	Cloudy with Rains
Legazpi	Partly Cloudy	Cagayan de Oro	Cloudy with Rains
Calapan	Partly Cloudy	Davao	Cloudy with Rains

NPA disowns mayor's murder

By Norman Bordadora
and Marlon Ramos, *PDI Southern Luzon Bureau*

WE DIDN'T do it.

That's what the Melito Glor Command of the New People's Army operating in Southern Tagalog claimed amid allegations that communist gunmen were behind the killing of Sta. Rosa City Mayor Leon Arcillas the other day.

Gregorio "Ka Roger" Rosal, spokesperson of the Communist Party of the Philippines, told the INQUIRER yesterday that the Melito Glor Command had denied any involvement in the broad daylight shooting of Arcillas inside City Hall.

Rosal said he spoke to Tirso Alcantara, one of the leaders of the NPA command operating in Southern Tagalog, and the latter denied that they carried out the assassination.

Rosal, however, added that he was also checking with other NPA units to determine if communist rebels were involved in the killing.

"Initial indications would show that the NPA was not involved. But I will continue to communicate with other units to know for sure," Rosal said in a telephone interview.

Rosal also declined to comment whether or not Arcillas committed "crimes against the people."

Arcillas had just finished officiating the wedding of 11 couples (not 15 as earlier reported) when he was gunned down by still unknown assailants inside the City Hall.

He was rushed to the University of Perpetual Help Hospital but expired few hours later due to a bullet that penetrated his skull. Doctors said Arcillas' skull was severely damaged.

Still no suspects

Members of the task force created to investigate the killing said they were still collating the evidence and testimonies from witnesses.

Supt. Mario Sanga, chief of the Criminal Investigation and Detection Group in Calabarzon, said they were now looking into the possibility that the suspects pretended to be among the couples in the civil wedding rites that Arcillas had officiated shortly before he was gunned down.

Sanga said it was also possible that the gunmen disguised as visitors at the wedding ceremonies.

He said a record of the civil registrar showed that there were only nine couples who registered for last Tuesday's wedding but 11 couples showed up that morning.

A check made by the INQUIRER with the city registrar's office showed that there were only nine marriage licenses released and signed after the ceremonies.

In Manila, Interior Secretary Angelo Reyes told yesterday the police force to look into all possible angles surrounding the death of Arcillas.

"I am hereby directing the PNP to use all its resources to bring to the bar of justice all the perpetrators of this treacherous killing," Reyes said. "This dastardly act should not go unpunished."

Reyes said the Arcillas killing was a painful reminder that "public service entails great sacrifice and risk to their lives as (public servants) work for a just and orderly society."

GMA, help us

The family of Arcillas yesterday asked the help of President Macapagal-Arroyo for a speedy resolution of the killing.

Reading from a prepared statement for the family, Arleen Arcillas-Nazareno, the mayor's youngest daughter, said his father had been a devoted supporter of Ms Arroyo and her administration's economic programs.

"My father had been a staunch ally of the (President), both personally and (of) her programs. Our family needs your support now. May justice be served as soon as possible," Arcillas-Nazareno said.

She added: "With the gruesome murder of our father, we ask nothing but a speedy investigation to find out who killed him and who masterminded it. I hope my father's case will not remain just a criminal statistic." *With a report from Delfin Mallari, PDI Southern Luzon Bureau*

Plunder trial makes house call

By Nelson T. Flores

JUSTICES of the Sandiganbayan Special Division trying the plunder charges against deposed President Joseph Estrada conducted an inspection of the house and environs of Estrada's Greenhills residence that was the scene of the alleged delivery of P130 million in kickbacks from tobacco excise taxes to Estrada in 1998.

But the five-member court could not go through with the re-enactment of the alleged delivery of the cash to the detained ex-president by Ilocos Sur Gov. Luis "Chavit" Singson because there was no P130 million in cash available for the exercise.

The main objective of the re-enactment was to prove that one man was capable of carrying P130 million in cash and distribute it to a number of people in a short time.

Defense lawyer Rene Saguisag said the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas had no demonetized bills in that amount as such bills are immediately destroyed to prevent their improper use. Saguisag said other possibilities would be explored with the BSP.

But the Sandiganbayan justices led by presiding Justice Teresita De Castro decided to push through with the inspection of Estrada's home at No. 1 Polk St., Greenhills, San Juan under the scorching summer heat.

They inspected the front lawn of the Estrada residence and the corner of Buchanan and Polk Streets where Singson said he was dropped off by Estrada's gambling crony Charlie "Atong" Ang when they delivered the P130 million to Estrada on Aug. 31, 1998.

The court determined that the residence was under guard and had a concrete fence measuring more than 10 ft high and an iron gate more than 9 ft high. It was also established that the distance to the house's main gate from the corner of Buchanan St. was 336 ft, or about 112 meters.

The inspection also established that the residence had a spacious front garage and that the garage was about five meters away from the house's main door.

Special Prosecutor Dennis Villa-Ignacio said everything was exactly as Singson claimed in his testimony.

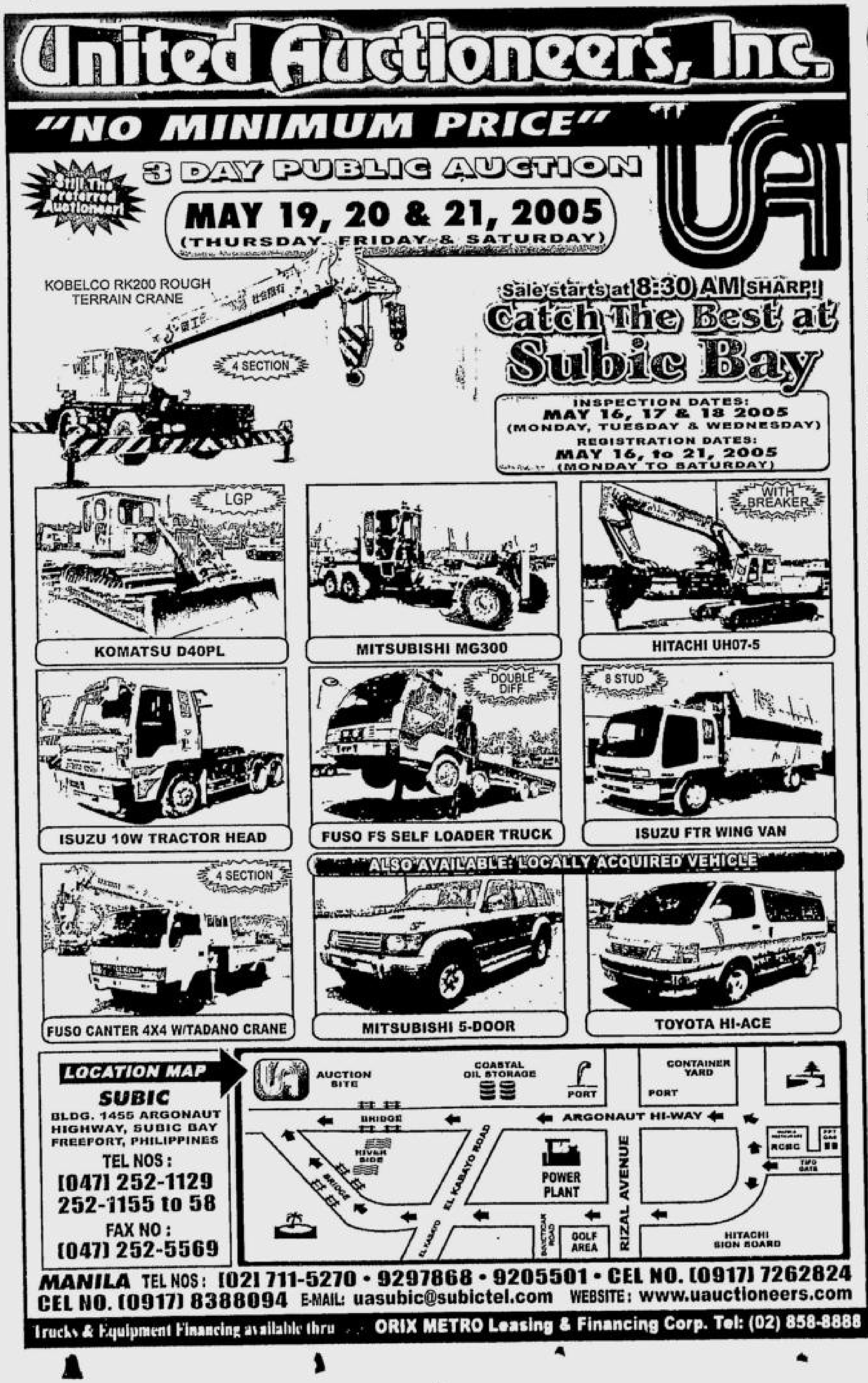
Villa-Ignacio said the ocular inspection proved the prosecution's claim that Singson delivered the excise tax kickbacks to Estrada and that from Ang's car parked at the garage of Estrada's residence, the cash, which was inside four *bayong* (bags made of woven palm leaves) was carried into the Estrada house.

Saguisag however had a different view, claiming that Singson's sworn affidavit and testimony did not jibe with what was found out during yesterday's exercise.

"Singson was lying through his teeth when he made those allegations against President Estrada," Saguisag said.

LAWYERS ON CALL: Lawyers involved in the Joseph Estrada plunder trial visit the Estrada residence on Polk Street, Greenhills for an inspection. They are (from left) state prosecutor Dennis Villa Ignacio, defense lawyers Rene Saguisag and Jose Flaminiano and Justice Diosdado Peralta.

JOAN BONDOC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GMA says she'll raise VAT to 12%

By Gil C. Cabacungan Jr., TJ Burgonio
and Norman Bordadora

ALTHOUGH Jan. 1, 2006 is still months away, President Macapagal-Arroyo yesterday already made it clear that she would exercise the standby authority granted to her by Congress to raise the 10 percent value added tax (VAT) rate to 12 percent next year.

"Let me be very clear that I will exercise the authority given to me by Congress with decisiveness. I will not shy from making the tough decisions (to raise the rate) in order to move the nation forward," the President said in a briefing in Malacañang.

The President made the assurance to appease jittery investors and creditors who have raised doubts that a final and lasting solution to the country's fiscal crisis has been reached after the bicameral conference committee retained the VAT rate at 10 percent.

In anticipation of a barrage a lawsuits questioning her discretionary powers, the President expressed optimism the provision would hurdle all legal questions. "We have brilliant lawyers in the Senate like Senate President Franklin Drilon, and they addressed all these issues on constitutionality in the preparation of the language (of the VAT bill)."

Senate Minority Leader Aquilino Pimentel, Jr. said that he and six other senators will question before the Supreme Court the constitutionality of the standby authority given to the President.

The government expects to generate P28.75 billion from the VAT bill for the remaining months of the year and P105 billion next year, including the anticipated rate hike to 12 percent.

Although it fell short of her expectations, the President praised the approval of the VAT bill as a "victory for the nation (which is now) one step closer to economic stability." "This is the capstone of the first phase of my economic reform agenda," said the President.

At the Senate, some senators yesterday looked more relaxed and apparently relieved that the VAT measure was finally ratified after weeks of fierce debates.

"Relieved, finally," a smiling Senate President Franklin Drilon chuckled, recalling the contentious debate on the measure on the floor as well as outside. "It's a very taxing episode."

Opposition Sen. Edgardo Angara, who voted in favor of the measure along with Drilon and 11 other administration senators, said that the bill was "now a thorn out of the way."

"I'm very relieved. I hope the nation survives this. GMA will have no more excuses," Sen. Sergio Osmena said in an interview.

At the House of Representatives, the bicam report on the VAT was finally ratified at 8:13 last night, paving the way for its signing by the President anytime now.

Pimentel believes the standby authority given the President is patently unconstitutional since it unduly delegates legislative power to the Chief Executive in matters of taxation.

Pimentel said the 1987 Constitution delegates to the President the power to modify tariff rates, export and import quotas, and other duties, but not tax rates.

As this developed, Vice President Noli de Castro yesterday warned traders against unnecessary increases in the prices of basic commodities.

De Castro, who is presidential adviser on price monitoring, said the government had intensified its crack down on unscrupulous traders who might take advantage of the situation. *With a report from Cynthia D. Balana and Michael Lim Ubac*

This time, Petron hikes prices first

GOING against what it had done these past few oil price increases, Petron Corp. was among the first to raise gasoline, diesel and kerosene prices by 50 centavos a liter at 12:01 a.m. today.

Eastern Petroleum Corp. increased fuel prices by the same level at 6 p.m. yesterday, while Flying V dealers were advised to jack up their prices by around the same level at different times within the day.

Petron said this particular price hike would reflect the oil firms' costs in April.

For the past several fuel price increases, Petron had been among the last, if not always the last to increase its prices.

In mid-April, local oil firms raised gasoline, diesel and kerosene prices by 75 centavos a liter. Pilipinas Shell Petroleum Corp., Caltex Philippines Inc. and Total (Philippines) Corp. also hiked cooking gas prices by 75 centavos a kilogram.

Petron followed suit only two weeks later, raising fuel pump prices by 50 centavos a liter and cooking gas prices by 50 centavos per kilogram.

As a result, some oil firms that had dealers situated near Petron service stations had to roll back prices by 25 centavos a liter to remain competitive.

RP protests discrimination of Filipino passengers on flights to Israel

THE PHILIPPINES has lodged a formal protest with Israel for allegedly segregating Filipina travellers at the back of aircraft on flights to Tel Aviv, the foreign department here said yesterday.

Filipinos boarding flights to Israel's main Ben Gurion International Airport are made to undergo "overly strict scrutiny and assigned seats at the rear of the aircraft," the department said in a statement, citing a report by Manila's ambassador to Israel, Antonio Modena.

Cellular phones of Filipino workers are also confiscated, preventing them from seeking help with the Philippine consulate, it alleged.

Modena has lodged a complaint with Israel's Interior Minister Ophir Paz-Pines, who promised he would meet with airport operatives to improve the treatment of Filipinos, the statement said.

"The Philippine ambassador took exception to the segregation of incoming Filipinos from other passengers by personnel of the interior ministry posted at Israeli airports," it added.

The practice was in violation of an international convention on consular relations, the statement said.

There are some 30,000 Filipino workers in Israel, most of them maids and caregivers. *AFP*

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Banco de Oro Universal Bank (BDO) launched last May 10, 2005 the Public Offer for its Long-Term Negotiable Certificates of Deposit (LTNCD). This offering is a maiden issue in the market — the very first negotiable deposit of a Philippine Bank in the domestic capital markets with a maturity of 5 years and one day. Pricing to be set at a premium over the 91-day Treasury Bill rate as indicated on the MART1 page in Bloomberg. The offer is open to individuals and corporate investors from May 10, 2005 to May 20, 2005.

As of December 20, 2004, BDO ranked among the top nine banks in the Philippines in terms of total deposits, net loans, capital and total assets. Total Resources as of 31 December 2004 recorded a 20% increase at P179.1 billion, while deposits increased by 24% at P128.1 billion. BDO's NPL ratio of 5.9% ranks among the lowest in the industry.

BDO's consolidated net income for 2004 amounted to P2.0 billion representing a 33% improvement from the prior year's net income of P1.5 billion. Net interest income improved by 38% to P5.0 billion in 2004.

What are LTNCDs?
LTNCDs are negotiable certificates of deposit indicating an amount of indebtedness of a bank with a designated maturity. These represent the Bank's obligation to pay the LTNCD's face value upon maturity and the specified coupon or interest quarterly during the life of the certificate of deposit.

Why is BDO offering LTNCDs?
BDO is issuing LTNCDs to diversify the maturity profile of the Bank's deposits to fund its asset growth. The LTNCDs aim to cater to individuals and corporations in search of a superior investment alternative.

The offer is among the first issues of LTNCDs under the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas' guidelines governing the issuance of LTNCDs, under Circular 304 (Series of 2001).

Why invest in LTNCDs?
As a deposit hybrid, the LTNCDs are competitively priced, carrying a premium over the 3-month Treasury Bill benchmark rate (MART1). LTNCDs are negotiable, hence can be liquidated anytime at the current market price. LTNCDs carry PDIC insurance. The purpose of encouraging issues of LTNCDs is to mobilize savings and encourage long-term investments for individual investors. The investment is exempt from withholding tax if held to maturity.

How much is the minimum investment in an LTNCD?
When does it mature?
LTNCDs may be purchased for a minimum amount of P100,000 through any of the selling agents: BDO Capital and Investment Corporation, BDO Securities and the Lead Manager and sole Bookrunner for the issue, HSBC.

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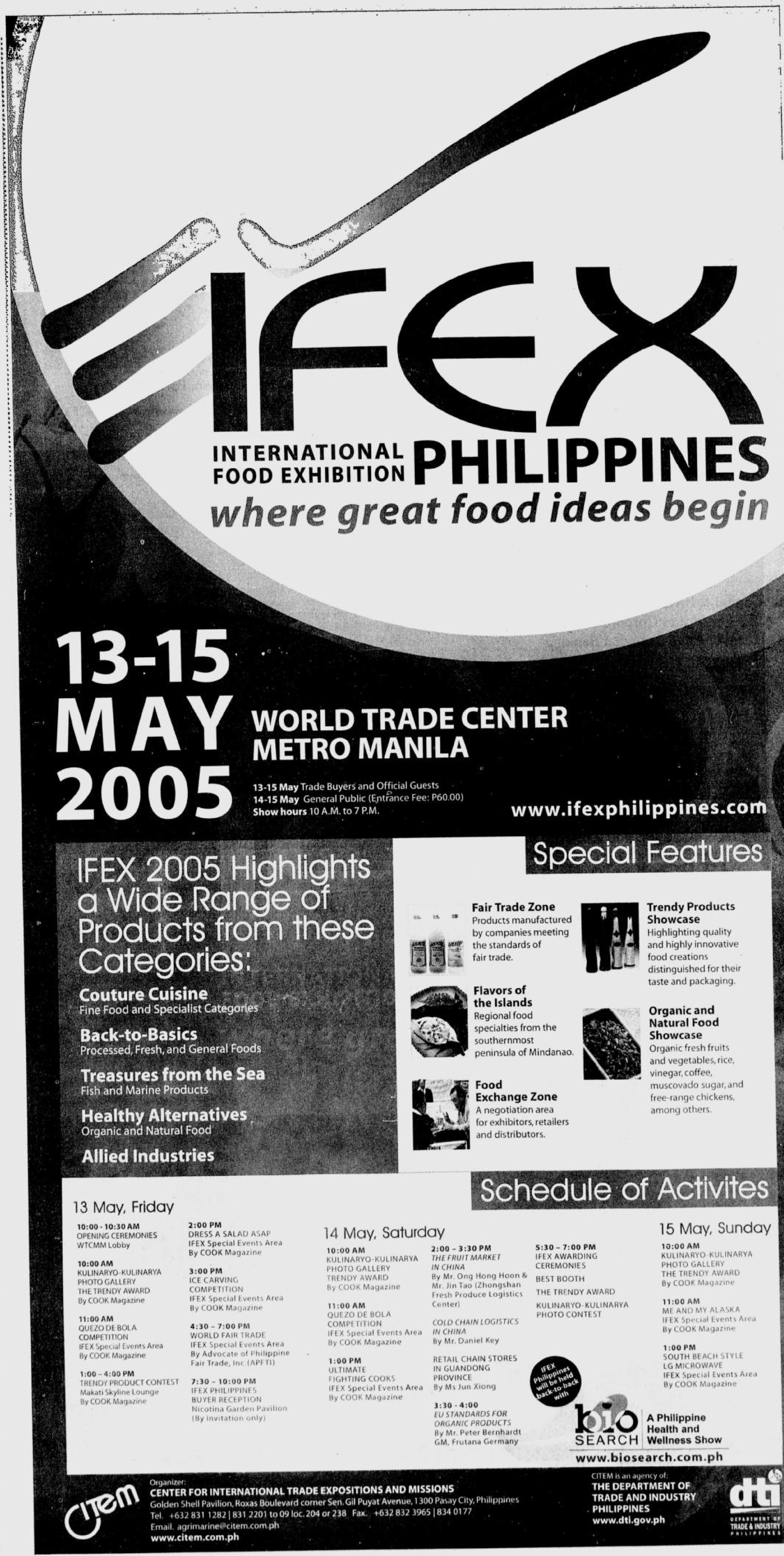

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Organic and Natural Food Showcase
Organic fresh fruits and vegetables, rice, vinegar, coffee, muscovado sugar, and free-range chickens, among others.

Schedule of Activites

13 May, Friday

10:00 - 10:30 AM
OPENING CEREMONIES
WTCMM Lobby

10:00 AM
KULINARYO-KULINARYA
PHOTO GALLERY
THE TRENDY AWARD
By COOK Magazine

11:00 AM
QUEZO DE BOLA
COMPETITION
IFEX Special Events Area
By COOK Magazine

1:00 – 4:00 PM
TRENDY PRODUCT CONTEST
Makati Skyline Lounge
By COOK Magazine

2:00 PM
DRESS A SALAD ASAP
IFEX Special Events Area
By COOK Magazine

3:00 PM
ICE CARVING
COMPETITION
IFEX Special Events Area
By COOK Magazine

4:30 – 7:00 PM
WORLD FAIR TRADE
IFEX Special Events Area
By Advocate of Philippine
Fair Trade, Inc. (APFTI)

7:30 – 10:00 PM
IFEX PHILIPPINES
BUYER RECEPTION
Nicotina Garden Pavilion
(By invitation only)

14 May, Saturday

10:00 AM
KULINARYO-KULINARYA
PHOTO GALLERY
TRENDY AWARD
By COOK Magazine

11:00 AM
QUEZO DE BOLA
COMPETITION
IFEX Special Events Area
By COOK Magazine

1:00 PM
ULTIMATE
FIGHTING COOKS
IFEX Special Events Area
By COOK Magazine

2:00 – 3:30 PM
THE FRUIT MARKET
IN CHINA
By Mr. Ong Hong Hoon &
Mr. Jin Tao (Zhongshan
Fresh Produce Logistics
Center)

COLD CHAIN LOGISTICS
IN CHINA
By Mr. Daniel Key

RETAIL CHAIN STORES
IN GUANDONG
PROVINCE
By Ms Jun Xiong

3:30 - 4:00
EU STANDARDS FOR
ORGANIC PRODUCTS
By Mr. Peter Bernhardt
GM, Frutana Germany

5:30 – 7:00 PM
IFEX AWARDING
CEREMONIES

BEST BOOTH

THE TRENDY AWARD

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PHOTO CONTEST

15 May, Sunday

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PHOTO GALLERY
THE TRENDY AWARD
By COOK Magazine

11:00 AM
ME AND MY ALASKA
IFEX Special Events Area
By COOK Magazine

1:00 PM
SOUTH BEACH STYLE
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GONZALEZ

DOJ chief: Do bishops want to run country?

By Philip C. Tubeza and Franco Emman Von Cena

DO THE bishops want to run the country?

Justice Secretary Raul Gonzalez accused the Catholic Church of being too involved in partisan politics.

"The Church has become too intrusive. Maybe they want to run the government," Gonzalez said in an interview in the House of Representatives.

Gonzalez was commenting on the call of three Catholic bishops for a change in government and Lingayen-Dagupan Archbishop Oscar Cruz's revelation that jueteng had worsened under the present administration.

When asked if the Department of Justice would file sedition charges against them, Gonzalez said: "No. Why should we? They don't have battalions."

Only if...

Gonzalez said the DOJ would formally investigate the jueteng lords on the list that Cruz submitted to Congress only if the bishop filed a formal case against them.

"We cannot have a preliminary investigation on something not filed. If the archbishop will file, we will," Gonzalez said.

"The problem is he said that his information was secondhand. He admitted that, so it's hearsay," he added.

He added that some of the people on Cruz list had been investigated before by Congress. He noted a notorious Central Luzon jueteng lord who was even invited to attend a hearing.

"The chair (of the House committee) then was (Paranaque Rep. Roilo) Golez. I was a member and we received so many threats during that time," Gonzalez said.

Loyalty checks

While admitting that he ordered state prosecutors to go on stand-by during the height of destabilization rumors, Gonzalez claimed that the administration was not monitoring its political adversaries or making loyalty checks among generals.

"Only my wife makes loyalty checks," he said.

He said the uproar over the unpopular issues of the expanded value added tax and the P2 fare hike could be minimized if the government properly presented its case to the public.

"You know these fare hikes and VAT, if you properly explain them, *wala yan* (that's nothing). All of these is about perception," Gonzalez said.

I'm strong enough, GMA tells critics

By Gil C. Cabacungan Jr.

"I AM strong enough to withstand all this unpopularity."

This is President Macapagal-Arroyo's retort to her critics calling for the return of a "strongman leader" that would help the country steer through the worsening economic times and growing public discontent.

In a briefing in Malacañang, the President refused to comment directly on the growing clamor for a stronger leader in Malacañang in the wake of rising criminality, surging prices of goods and services, and her plunging popularity and trust ratings.

But the President disputed her critics' assertion that she was a weak leader. " I have not been remiss in making unpopular decision that are good for the country's future," the President said.

One of the unpopular decisions that the President has actively pursued is the imposition of new taxes, specifically the expansion and rate increase of the value added tax needed by her government to cure its chronic budget deficit problems and prevent the country from slipping into a a deeper crisis.

Over the last few weeks, several retired generals and Catholic bishops have lobbied for an immediate change in leadership or system due to their on-going frustration at the string of failures of the President.

The President also denied that her undisclosed meeting with Vice Admiral Ernesto de Leon and other military officers in Palawan last Monday was part of a loyalty check to assess the support of the soldiers to her administration following the aborted Labor Day coup allegedly to be launched by retired generals.

"That is a good opportunity (to meet with military officers), that is not a loyalty check," said the President. "When I go to the provinces, the area commander joins me, the head of the PNP (Philippine National Police) joins me." The President said it was also coincidental that the presidential yacht was on a test run after lengthy repairs during her trip to Palawan.

The President said there was also nothing fishy about his meeting with outgoing US Ambassador Francis Ricciardone in Palawan because they attended the launching of various fisheries-related project funded by Washington. "We also had a little social diving together," the President said.

Amid reports of a loyalty check, the Palace issued a statement declaring that the military and police "were solidly behind the duly-constituted government."

"This has been proven again and again beyond doubt. So-called loyalty checks are unnecessary and superfluous," said Press Secretary Ignacio Bunye in a statement.

Not yet, GMA says of Cha-cha debate

By Christine O. Avendaño

PRESIDENT Macapagal-Arroyo dismissed yesterday any talks on changing or amending the 1987 Constitution for now, saying that the agreed one-year moratorium on this kind of talks was still ongoing.

"There's a one-year moratorium. So therefore for this whole Congress, this first session of congress, there's no talk of Chacha," President Arroyo told reporters when asked for comment on renewed calls in the House of Representatives for her to hasten the Charter change process.

"It will be in the second session and it is part of the medium term plan that there will be a constitutional convention," the President said.

The 13th Congress is in its first regular session and this was expected to expire in July or some three months from now.

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GMA: No more free dentures for soldiers

By Gil C. Cabacungan Jr.

THE COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF has spoken: stop giving free, false teeth to soldiers.

President Macapagal-Arroyo will ask her husband First Gentleman Jose Miguel Arroyo to shelve his "Bagong Ngiti sa Dating Ngebu" project because of speculation that the distribution of free dentures to soldiers was just a cover for Malacañang's loyalty check.

"The First Gentleman has this project of false teeth for policemen, teachers and now soldiers. But if it is going to be mistaken for something else, maybe I will suggest to him to discontinue it," said President Arroyo in a rare briefing in Malacañang.

Arroyo kicked off his free dentures program seven months ago but it was only in the last few days that his philanthropic work has been the subject of much skepticism. He visited the Southern Command in Zamboanga City and the Army's 103th Brigade in Basilan last weekend.

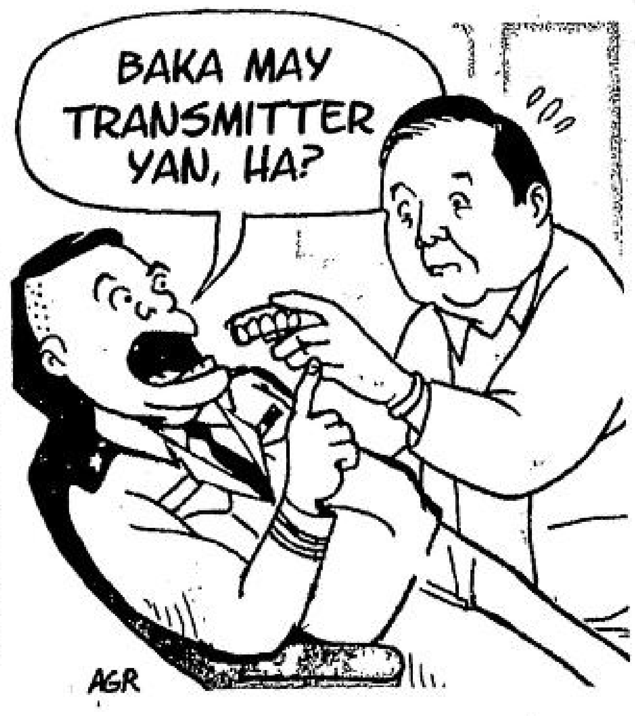
Arroyo is planning to bring his free dentures program in the next seven days to the Western Command in Palawan and Southern Luzon Command in Lucena, which has further fanned insinuations that he was conducting a loyalty check in behalf of the President.

The First Gentleman's visits to military camps have become more frequent especially after a group of retired generals bared its plan to overthrow the Arroyo administration in an aborted Labor Day takeover plan.

Although the President has stated she wanted the free dentures discontinued, Arroyo has been telling the soldiers lining up to fix their smile that the free dentures were a "special gift" from their commander-in-chief who considered her troops special.

Arroyo claimed that no government funds were used in his free dentures program that has benefited an estimated 6,200 toothless individuals, not only from the military and the police but also from the ranks of government street sweepers, park attendants and state hospital employees.

Arroyo has reportedly spent at least P4 million so far for the free dentures program, which was a spin-off from his "Bagong Mata Para sa May Katarata," a medical mission to give free surgery to mostly military personnel the First Gentleman launched in 2001.


BAKA MAY TRANSMITTER YAN, HA?
AGR

Mike quits press club of Negros

By Carla P. Gomez
PDI Visayas Bureau

BACOLOD CITY—First Gentleman Mike Arroyo has resigned as member of the Negros Press Club after his controversial induction last week triggered the resignation of three NPC officers who opposed it.

Arroyo called up NPC president Primo Esleyer on Tuesday and told him that he was resigning from the club to preserve peace and harmony in the organization.

"The First Gentleman told me that he was resigning and that his promise to provide PhilHealth insurance to NPC members would remain," Esleyer said.

Arroyo, a photo enthusiast, was inducted as NPC member on May 4 when the First Gentleman graced the oath-taking of newly elected NPC officers at L'Fisher Hotel.

But his induction did not sit well with some NPC officers.

Last Monday, Arman Toga, NPC vice president; Jaime Espina, NPC secretary; and Henry Cestina, NPC director, tendered their irrevocable resignation to the board.

They said their decision to step down was in protest over what they called "serious damage" to the integrity and honor of the club by the unwarranted induction of Arroyo as NPC member.

The three said Arroyo's induction to the club violated long-established NPC rules on membership because Arroyo was not "a practicing photojournalist."

They also took offense to the speech of the First Gentleman during the induction of NPC officers where Arroyo scored the Manila media for "failing to tell the truth" and for maligning him and his family endlessly with unfounded allegations.

Second-hand information

"We have been maligned with second-hand information by the Manila media that is not *true* and are just tsismis (gossip)," he said in his speech.

"They do not know how to police themselves. We are giving too much power to the media," he said, as he called on the provincial media to urge their Manila counterparts to report the truth.

But the three said that while they respected Arroyo's right to free expression, "the implication of his speech that our murdered colleagues deserved their fates was not only irresponsible, but reinforced the culture of impunity and violence that had led to this sorry state. How can we reward him with membership in the club?"

Twenty-three journalists have been killed since 2001, when President Macapagal-Arroyo assumed office. Six had been murdered this year alone.

In a letter sent to Esleyer yesterday to formalize his resignation, Arroyo said, "I regret that I had been misunderstood by some members of the organization. But I would like to assure them that it was never my intention to hurt the feelings of anyone."

THE DAILY GOSPEL

Thursday, May 12, 2005
7th Week of Easter

1st Reading:	Acts 22:30; 23:6-11
Gospel:	John 17:20-26

Jesus looked up to heaven and prayed, "I pray not only for these but also for those who through their word will believe in me. May they all be one as you Father are in me and I am in you. May they be one in us; so the world may believe that you have sent me.

"I have given them the Glory you have given me, that they may be one as we are one: I in them and you in me. Thus they shall reach perfection in unity and the world shall know that you have sent me and that I have loved them just as you loved me.

"Father, since you have given them to me, I want them to be with me where I am and see the Glory you gave me, for you loved me before the foundation of the world.

"Righteous Father, the world has not known you but I have known you, and these have known that you have sent me. As I revealed your Name to them, so will I continue to reveal it, so that the love with which you loved me may be in them and I also may be in them."

Commentary

Jesus prays for his disciples and for all those who will believe because of his disciples' preaching and lives—and so he prays for us and for all those who will believe because of our faithfulness to his Word. And he prays for oneness, for communion among us all, and oneness in the Trinity: Father, Son and Spirit. As God is one, we are to be in unity so that the world will know that in this communion Jesus loved us as the Father loved him. Jesus prays that we too will know his glory and share in it. Jesus has lived to reveal the Father to us and he will continue to reveal that love in his death, as in his life, so that this love that is between Jesus and the Father will be in us. Jesus' prayer is staggering, is frightening in its scope and depth and overwhelming. Jesus has prayed for us and this is what our God hopes for us. We must listen and let God make that prayer a reality in us, as believers and as his Body.

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DepEd laments zero hike in education budget

By Alcuin Papa

THE DEPARTMENT of Education lamented yesterday the zero increase in their budget for 2006.

In a press conference at the department offices in Pasig City, Education Undersecretary for Administration and Finance Juan Miguel Luz said the budget ceiling for the department in 2006 will be the same as the one for 2005.

"In short, there is no growth in the budget. You can't have zero growth in the budget," Luz said.

He calculated that the DepEd must have a budget that increases between six to eight percent every year to be able to effect any reforms in the education system.

Last year, the Deped got a total budget of P112.5 billion, most of which went to the payment of teachers' salaries.

But Luz said they are meeting with officials of the Department of Budget Management (DBM) to find a way to increase the DepEd's budget.

Luz explained that the department would need a bigger budget to also address the transfer of students from private schools to public schools. He said that over the past five years, the DepEd had noticed a five percent increase in student population due to the transfer of students from private to public schools.

A total of 5.5 million students are currently in the public school system.

"To deal with the increase in student population, the shortages of classrooms, furniture, books and other facilities need to be addressed with a bigger budget," Luz said.

On the other hand, the DepEd is trying out a program that will give deserving public school students a chance to transfer to private schools with quality education.

SC: Singer owns the song

By Armand N. Nocum

THE SINGER has the final ownership of his song.

The Supreme Court yesterday stressed this point as it denied the petition of the Bayanihan Music Philippines Inc. to issue a temporary restraining order enjoining singer Jose Mari Chan from further recording and distributing two of his songs.

In an eight-page decision, the tribunal said Chan owns his musical composition titled "Can We Just Stop and Talk a While?" and "Afraid For Love to Fade."

"Unquestionably, respondent Chan, being undeniably the composer and author of the lyrics of the two songs, is protected by the mere fact alone that he is the creator thereof, conformably with Republic Act No. 8293, otherwise known as the Intellectual Property Code," the SC said.

It cited the law as saying that "Works are protected by the sole fact of their creation, irrespective of their mode or form of expression, as well as of their content, quality and purpose."

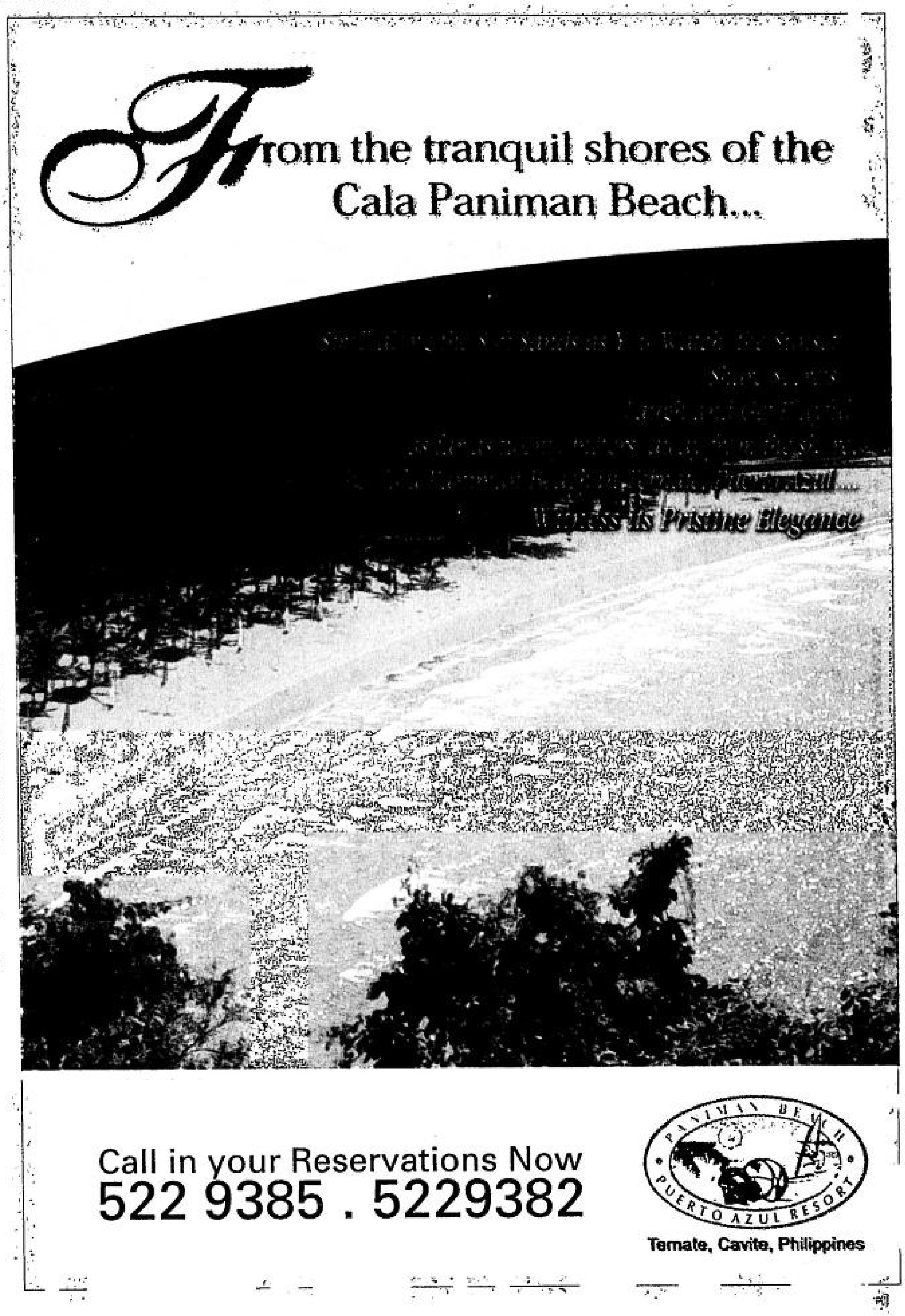
The issue stemmed from the fact that in 1973, Chan entered into a contract with Bayanihan where he assigned the recording firm "rights, interests and participation" over his two compositions.

But in 1999, allegedly without informing Bayanihan, Chan authorized BMG Records (Pilipinas) to "distribute the aforementioned musical compositions in a then recently released album of singer Lea Salonga."

This prompted Bayanihan to go to court, claiming Chan had violated the provisions of the Intellectual Property Code.

In his defense, Chan said it was "never his intention to divest himself of all his rights and interest" over his music and that Bayanihan failed to make good its obligation in the contract to "effectively advertise his musical composition for two years." He said this led to the "rescission" of the contract.

The Quezon City Regional Trial Court eventually ruled in favor of Chan, a decision affirmed by the Court of Appeals last year.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Ricciardone: Cotabato doormat for terrorists

From page A1

Ricciardone's three-year tour of duty in the Philippines will end on May 13.

"We think we better get a grip on that because we need to understand what's going on down there and make sure that these evil people cannot use Cotabato," he added.

For business, not bombers

Ricciardone further said: "Put it this way, we don't want to build a road that these people will use in coming in and out of Cotabato. We want to build a road that farmers and business people and truck drivers, tricycle drivers, and taxi drivers will use to get rich and prosper. We don't want to build a road that's going to make it easier for bombers to sneak in and out in the dead of night and elude the Armed forces of the Philippines."

To identify real MILF

Ricciardone also said that Washington was still trying to "identify the real" Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF).

"We are still wondering why some MILF leaders would talk about peace and development on one hand but on the other, there are others still communicating with world class murderers," he said.

Ricciardone said Washington was trying to identify those who are supporting the Jemaah Islamiyah and Khaddafy Janjalani.

Indignation rally

Cotabato City Mayor Muslimin Sema recently led an "indignation rally" against the United States as a result of the deferment of the road project.

Michael Yates, Philippine Mission Director of the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), had written Sema a letter informing the mayor of the project's suspension allegedly because international financiers of terrorists are reportedly passing through Cotabato City, with the mayor's supposed "knowledge and support."

Yesterday, however, Ricciardone said the mayor could also be unaware of the reported activities of terrorists and their supporters.

"I think Mayor Sema does not really know, nor do I think people in Cotabato as well," Ricciardone said.

Road not canceled

The US ambassador also gave an assurance that the road project would not be cancelled.

He also praised the recent developments in the peace talks between the Arroyo administration and the MILF.

There have been unverified claims that Washington is set to include MILF leaders in its list of terrorists.

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Duque new DOH chief

From page A1

"There are some who are qualified now when they were not technically qualified before, but it doesn't mean that they're automatically to be appointed."

Political reality

Sought for his comment that his appointment as health secretary was a political reward, the 48-year-old Duque told Palace reporters: "Political paybacks are the usual thing, it's a political reality."

What's important, he said, is that the people placed in such positions are qualified for the job.

In a subsequent talk with reporters, Duque said he did not consider his appointment political payback on the part of Ms Arroyo.

"I would not consider it a political accommodation . . . I think in terms of my track record, I would leave it to everyone to scrutinize what we have accomplished while we have been at the helm of Philhealth," he told reporters.

Track record

During his stint as Philhealth president and CEO, Duque said he was able "to increase Philhealth membership by 140 percent in 2004, increase the reserves of Philhealth from P29 billion to P49.5 billion with total assets of about P51.5 billion."

Duque also cited the "unprecedented" collection of premium payments by Philhealth.

"You know the whole Philhealth have been transformed into a very efficient organization so that in 2001, the collection was only P8.7 billion, now it's up to P16 billion," he said.

Duque said he had been offered the top post at the health department as early as last year. It was only last month, however, when an emissary of Ms Arroyo informed him the position would be his.

HISTORY repeats itself: The father and namesake of incoming Health Secretary Francisco Duque was President Diosdado Macapagal's health secretary. EDWIN BACASMAS

Dayrit, who was at the forefront of government's efforts to protect the country from the onslaught of SARS two years ago, earlier asked Ms Arroyo to appoint his successor by May 31.

Dayrit has been appointed one of the 17 commissioners of a WHO agency tackling social issues related to health. He has been contracted to work for the international body for three years.

Disappointed

Migrante, however, voiced disappointment over Ms Arroyo's decision to tap Duque as Dayrit's successor.

"This is another bare-faced example of the President's political payback. Duque played an important role in her campaign juggernaut in the last elections," Migrante chair Connie Bragas-Regalado said.

She said Duque was also responsible for the questionable transfer of the P530-million OFW Medicare Trust Fund from the Overseas Workers Welfare Administration to PhilHealth in March last year.

She recalled that Duque had told Ms Arroyo in a 2003 memorandum that the transfer "will have a significant bearing on the 2004 elections and on the President's desire to provide health insurance to 8 million indigents by the end of 2003."

Regalado also cited Duque's revelation that PhilHealth had incurred at least P520 million in losses due to padded or bogus insurance claims.

"Something is definitely wrong with Duque if P520 million gets lost to fraudulent claims. Claims can be accessed with top-level approval. Most likely, there is a syndicate lurking within PhilHealth," she said.

Migrante said Ms Arroyo should stop the practice of "rewarding those responsible for an irregularity with more chances in committing bigger anomalies."

Qualifications

After graduating from the UST College of Medicine and Surgery in 1982, Duque earned a Master of Science degree at Georgetown University in Washington five years later. He also took up Immunology and Scientific Training at the Department of Microbiology of the Georgetown School of Medicine from 1985 to 1988.

Duque had served as health undersecretary and permanent representative to the PhilHealth board when Ms Arroyo was still the Vice President and social welfare secretary. He was also the board chair of Lyceum-Northwestern University in Dagupan City from 1991 to 2000. *With report by Jerome Aning*

Ex-coconut authority chief . . .

From page A1

Rolando Golez as chief executive officer of the Coconut Industry Investment Fund (CIIF). But she also said Camilo Sabio, the newly appointed chair of the Presidential Commission on Good Government would be the officer in charge of the CIIF Oil Mills Group in the meantime.

"When things have stabilized, Sabio will relinquish the chairmanship [to Coronacion]," Ms Arroyo said at a news conference.

Golez resigned the other day, following the disclosure of the lavish perks and privileges he had been enjoying as president and CEO of the CIIF.

Ms Arroyo said she had immediately accepted Golez's resignation.

Sabio told reporters that United Coconut Planters Bank (UCPB) and the PCGG would continue with the investigation of Golez despite his resignation, "so that it would be fair, due process would be followed, and the law would be implemented."

In a phone interview, Coronacion said Ms Arroyo called to offer him the position the other day. He said he accepted the offer because he could not refuse the President.

"I wasn't expecting [the offer] because I was under the impression that there was somebody else for the position," he said.

Coronacion is the first administrator of the Philippine Coconut Authority (PCA) under the Arroyo administration. He held the position from 2001 to 2004.

Reached by phone, Romeo Royandoyan, executive director of the Philippine Peasant Institute, said many farmers' groups would be elated by Coronacion's appointment.

"If the news is true, we wholeheartedly support [the appointment] because he's highly qualified," Royandoyan said. "His heart is with the coconut farmers."

Coconut man

After his stint at the PCA, Coronacion was named to the board of directors of the CIIF Oil Mills Group—his position at present.

Coronacion said he also served as a special resource person for UCPB-CIIF Finance and Development Corp.

"So I've never left the industry after PCA," he said.

As the new CEO of the CIIF, Coronacion intends to examine the company structure, review its programs and strengthen its coordination with the Department of Agriculture, PCA and UCPB, among others.

"There is also a need to institute mechanisms for more effective farmers' participation in the formulation and implementation of programs," he said.

Before the PCA, Coronacion was a senior special assistant at the Department of Foreign Affairs, during the term of Foreign Secretary Raul Manglapus.

He worked with the DFA until 1992.

He served as a deputy administrator of the Philippine Overseas Employment Administration from 1996 to 1998.

Coronacion said he even dabbled briefly in politics when he ran for a seat in the House—and lost—during the elections in 1998.

Golez should explain

Lawmakers want Golez to explain to Congress and the Ombudsman the use of the coconut levy fund for his perks as CIIF president and CEO.

"The issue is of national importance because the money used for the perks and privileges of Golez came from the coconut farmers. How much of the levy collected from coconut farmers has been diverted to these perks and privileges?" said Davao del Sur Rep. Douglas Cagas, vice chair of the House committee on good government.

Cagas and Lanao del Sur Rep. Benasing Macarambon, chair of the House committee on agriculture and food, said Golez's resignation "did not absolve him of the extravagant practices" of the CIIF during his administration.

They said Congress and the Ombudsman should have separate investigations and also look into other government agencies that might have followed the CIIF example.

"Well, I'm glad [Golez], resigned but I think he should still explain. We could invite him as a resource person to air his side," said Akbayan Rep. Loretta Anne Rosales.

According to Rosales, Macarambon promised that his committee would conduct an investigation next week.

On Tuesday, Representatives Lorenzo Tanada III, Rafael Nantes, Proceso Alcala, Danilo Suarez, Del de Guzman and Edcel Lagman also filed a resolution calling for an inquiry into the loss of some P70 million from the CIIF fund.

"The [coconut levy] fund is a public fund, as declared by the Supreme Court, and is owned by millions of coconut farmers nationwide," Tanada said.

"It should not be used to pay for the ostentatious lifestyle of its supposed guardians and caretakers, especially when an economic crisis is devastating the lives of the coconut farmers and the Filipino people," he added.

Independent audit

The investigating committee led by UCPB chair Jose Perez has decided to select an independent audit firm to conduct a thorough study of the financial reports of the CIIF group of companies.

"The committee is now selecting among the top auditing firms including Price Waterhouse Coopers, Mananghaya, among others. This will guide us all in setting the proper perspective in this investigation. We will assist them in gathering the needed data," Perez said.

He reiterated that the audit of financial reports and also of related company policies would be appropriate as all government-owned and -controlled corporations were subject to austerity measures, as ordered by Malacanang.

Perez said Golez's resignation did not save him from facing an inquiry regarding his expenses at the CIIF.

"He said he will cooperate well with the investigation," Perez said. "We will give him the chance to do so."

He added a subpoena would be issued to Golez to compel him to appear in the next hearing. *With reports from Philip C. Tubeza, Franco Emman von Cena and Christine Gaylican*

Imelda wants to go to China

By Nelson F. Flores

FORMER first lady Imelda Marcos yesterday asked the Sandigabayan to allow her to travel to China for medical consultation with a specialist from Shanghai.

In a two-page motion, Mrs. Marcos, through her lawyer Robert A.C. Sison, also asked the anti-graft court to reinstate her travel bond for the purpose of this travel.

Sison said Marcos wants again to consult a certain Dr. Yen, a traditional Chinese medicine expert, on her knee problem, which was earlier attended to by Dr. David Sweetnam in London, England. He added that Dr. Yen is available on June 9 until the 24th.

According to Sison, Dr. Sweetnam instructed Mrs. Marcos to see a physiotherapist and undergo treatment course, which she did. But her client now is again suffering from persistent knee pain, especially when alighting from a vehicle, and/or standing for a long time.

Mrs. Marcos then tried alternative medicine sometime in August 2002 when she was permitted to travel to China, Sison explained.

Sison said she would comply with all the conditions set by the court for her travel. He added that Marcos has executed waivers of appearance in order to ensure that the trial of cases pending against her will proceed even in her absence.

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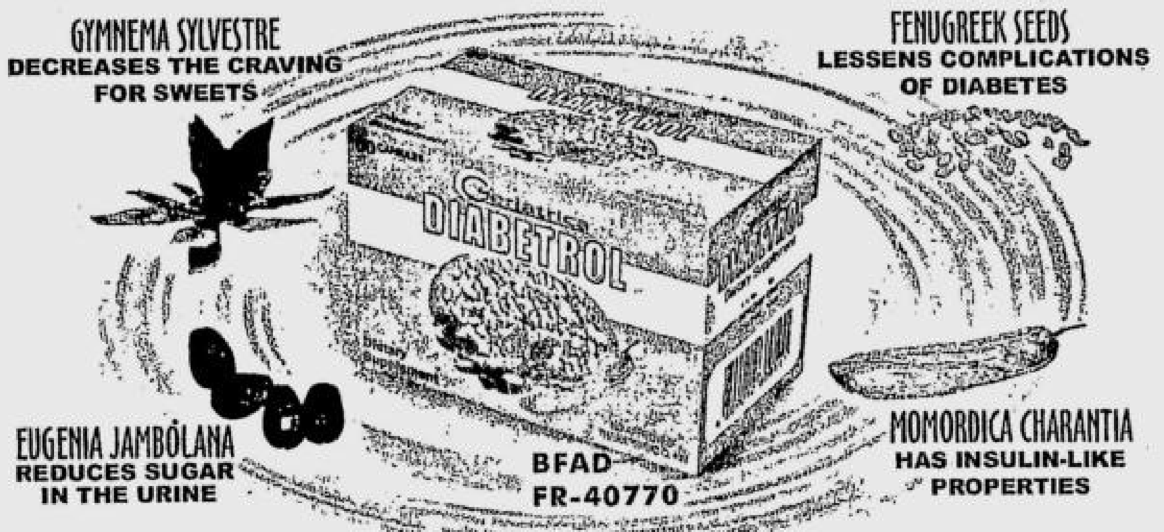

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Dept. of Agriculture Compound M. Velez St.
Guadalupe 6000 Cebu City

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Office of the Deputy Ombudsman for Luzon
3rd flr. OMB Building Government Center
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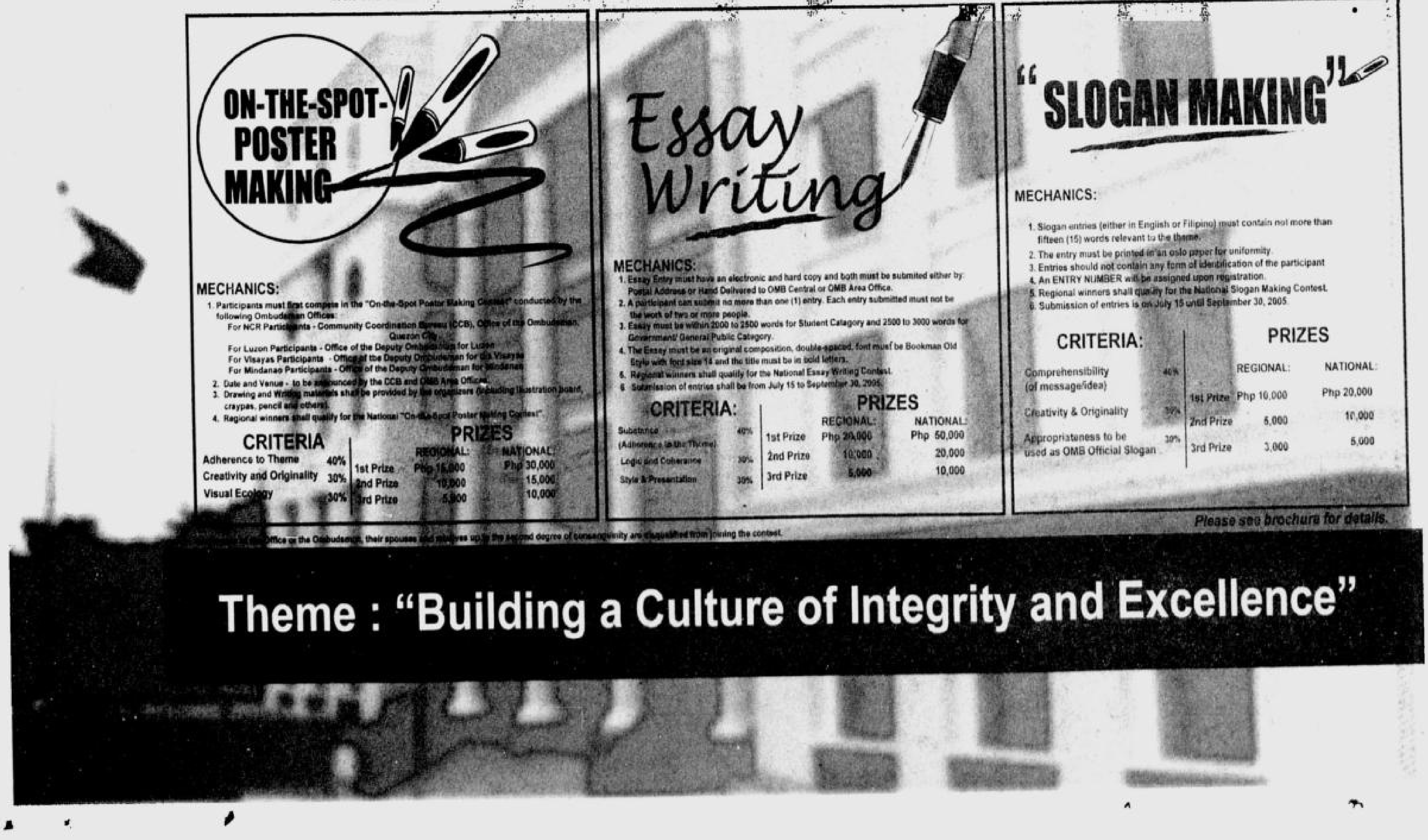

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   For Mindanao Participants - Office of the Deputy Ombudsman for Mindanao
2. Date and Venue - to be announced by the CCB and OMB Area Offices.
3. Drawing and Writing materials shall be provided by the organizers (including illustration board, craypas, pencil and others).
4. Regional winners shall qualify for the National "On-the-Spot Poster Making Contest".

CRITERIA	
Adherence to Theme	40%
Creativity and Originality	30%
Visual Ecology	30%

PRIZES	REGIONAL:	NATIONAL:
1st Prize	Php 15,000	Php 30,000
2nd Prize	10,000	15,000
3rd Prize	5,000	10,000

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MECHANICS:

1. Essay Entry must have an electronic and hard copy and both must be submited either by Postal Address or Hand Delivered to OMB Central or OMB Area Office.
2. A participant can submit no more than one (1) entry. Each entry submitted must not be the work of two or more people.
3. Essay must be within 2000 to 2500 words for Student Category and 2500 to 3000 words for Government/ General Public Category.
4. The Essay must be an original composition, double-spaced, font must be Bookman Old Style with font size 14 and the title must be in bold letters.
5. Regional winners shall qualify for the National Essay Writing Contest.
6. Submission of entries shall be from July 15 to September 30, 2005.

CRITERIA:	
Substance (Adherence to the Theme)	40%
Logic and Coherence	30%
Style & Presentation	30%

PRIZES	REGIONAL:	NATIONAL:
1st Prize	Php 20,000	Php 50,000
2nd Prize	10,000	20,000
3rd Prize	5,000	10,000

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MECHANICS:

1. Slogan entries (either in English or Filipino) must contain not more than fifteen (15) words relevant to the theme.
2. The entry must be printed in an oslo paper for uniformity.
3. Entries should not contain any form of identification of the participant
4. An ENTRY NUMBER will be assigned upon registration.
5. Regional winners shall qualify for the National Slogan Making Contest.
6. Submission of entries is on July 15 until September 30, 2005.

CRITERIA:	
Comprehensibility (of message/idea)	40%
Creativity & Originality	30%
Appropriateness to be used as OMB Official Slogan	30%

PRIZES	REGIONAL:	NATIONAL:
1st Prize	Php 10,000	Php 20,000
2nd Prize	5,000	10,000
3rd Prize	3,000	5,000

[illegible] Office of the Ombudsman, their spouses and relatives up to the second degree of consanguinity are disqualified from joining the contest.

Please see brochure for details.

Theme : "Building a Culture of Integrity and Excellence"

27 killed in Benguet bus crash

From page A1

Cordillera, citing initial police investigation.

That stretch of the highway is notorious for accidents, police said.

The bus was torn in half. Rescue workers had to use a payloader to lift the wreckage and recover the bodies of more victims.

"The bus was headed for a highway viaduct where it could have hurt residents [in the area] had it careened farther," said Vicente Tomazar, OCD-Cordillera director.

Thrown out of bus

Many of the passengers who died were thrown out of the vehicle, Tomazar said. The OCD reported that 24 people were killed at the crash site, while three others, including Biala, died at the Baguio General Hospital and Medical Center.

Biala's wife Lita said she and her daughter would have accompanied her husband to Baguio, but they decided against it to save on fare money.

"We were hoping that he would recover soon because his body was responding to the cobalt treatment and chemotherapy sessions," she said.

She said Biala started treatment in Baguio for a tumor in the nasal passage on April 18.

Another fatality, SPO3 Rufino Gargollo, officer in charge of the Tuba police substation at Sitio Poyopoy here, was on his way to his post.

Fatalities

As of press time last night, the OCD identified only nine of the 24 passengers it declared to have died on the spot. They were Dindo Dulay, bus conductor, 35; Christina Natavio, of Mangaldan; Incarnacion Macapio, of Sual, Pangasinan; Bernardo Fernando, of Sto. Tomas, La Union; Oscar Ninalga, of Bokawkan Road; Ricardo Aduan, of Tuba; Angel Gayadan of Kitma Road, Baguio; one Fernando, of San Fabian, Pangasinan; and Gargollo.

RESCUERS and policemen cover dead bodies retrieved from the wreckage of the Byron bus.
AFP

Those who died at the emergency room of the BGHMC were Biala; Dennis Caramto, of Barangay Kias, Baguio; and Florito Fernandez, of Bauang, La Union.

The bus driver, known only as Aldo, has yet to be positively identified from among the bodies.

Monitoring 3 kids

Tomazar said hospital authorities were monitoring the condition of three children—Epang Fernandez, 5; Jodessa Caramtoan, 6 months; and an unidentified 7-year-old girl—who were pulled out of the wreckage. They suffered head injuries and were confined at the BGHMC's intensive care.

Byron employees said the bus left Baguio at about 11 a.m. with only 25 passengers. They said the driver could have picked up more people along the way.

1999 accident

On Oct. 30, 1999, five persons were killed while 37 others were hurt when a Byron bus lost its brakes and hit the iron railings of the highway's stretch in Barangay Taloy Sur here.

The Marcos Highway has just undergone extensive rehabilitation and is considered one of the best-designed highways north of Metro Manila. *Vincent Cabreza, Gobleth Moulic and Toots Soberano, PDI Northern Luzon Bureau*

AFP book links NUJP to communist groups

By Fe Zamora

ONCE more, with feeling.

In a book this time, the Armed Forces of the Philippines has linked the National Union of Journalists of the Philippines (NUJP) to communist groups, reinforcing its earlier claim contained in the video presentation "Knowing the enemy: Are we missing the point?"

The book, "Trinity of War" (Book III), also described the online publication "Bulatlat.com" as "Left-leaning," and listed several sectoral groups, including those from the Church, as "being infiltrated" by communist terrorist groups.

But Lt. Gen. Romeo Dominguez, chief of the Northern Luzon Command (Nolcom), which published the book as a "training material," said the book was different from the controversial VCD prepared by the Intelligence Service of the Armed Forces of the Philippines (Isafp).

"The VCD talked about enemies. The book is very clear that there is only one enemy, and that is the CPP-NPA-NDF organization," Dominguez told the INQUIRER during the book launching on May 4.

"Trinity of War: Book III" is the last of the three books by the AFP which seeks to "enlighten" both the government and the private sector on the "intricate details" of the 36-year-old communist insurgency.

Subtitled "The Grand Design of the CPP/NPA/NDF," the three-book series was put together by a staff led by Col. Gregorio Pio P. Catapang Jr., operations chief of the Northern Luzon Command (Nolcom) and editor in chief of "Northern Beacon," Nolcom's official publication.

Dominguez said the book was based on "thorough research by people whose integrity in the service is beyond reproach." He said the material gathered would be "corroborated by a compendium of captured documents and actual revelations of people who were once connected with the underground movement."

"Nothing in the book is fabricated," Dominguez said.

He said the book did not "accuse anyone or any group of conniving" with the CPP-NPA-NDF.

"It only cautions these entities that they are likely targets in the furtherance of the enemy's grand design," he said.

'It's impossible for her to be the mastermind'

From page A1

Yat was incredulous at suspect Roberto Lumagui's allegation that Ester had ordered him to scare her younger sister, Alicia, into giving up the money belonging to her.

"It is so easy to implicate people. If you are an ordinary person and you obey what she (Ester) says, I would not know what to call you," he said.

Yat, who described Ester as "old and frail" and "a diabetic," said his patient cannot even talk to people properly. She is always angry at everyone, he added.

"She is manic-depressive and has constant mood swings," Yat said, but refused to elaborate on exactly what ailed the eldest Ramos sister.

Lumagui, who was an occasional handyman at the Ramos home, gave himself up and confessed that he was with the four men who broke into the house in Palanan, Makati, on April 24.

He said it was Ester who had planned the caper, but only to scare Alicia who was said to have been niggardly in giving Ester her pension money. But the break-in ended horribly with Alicia being killed. Her youngest sister, Leticia, escaped with minor injuries.

Still to be confirmed

The Makati police said Lumagui's surprise revelation about Ester's alleged role in the crime had yet to be confirmed by credible witnesses.

"It would not stand in court as it is. That would be weak because it was just him speaking. Once Ester denies his allegations, it would just be his word against hers," said Chief Insp. Manny Santos, chief of the Makati police department's criminal investigation division.

P3-M property

Yesterday, the justice department summoned Leticia Ramos to a preliminary investigation as NBI investigators explored yet another angle in the case—that a family squabble over a piece of property could have led to Alicia's killing.

Investigators are looking into what interest, if any, the other two Ramos sisters had in a P3-million property that Alicia had bought in Sucat, Parañaque.

But the NBI's NCR director, Edmundo Arugay, said that right now investigators did not see any "connection" between the property and the killing.

Also yesterday, the DOJ elevated the case filed in the Makati Regional Trial Court against the four accused and several unnamed others to robbery and murder from robbery with homicide.

State Prosecutor Emmanuel Velasco yesterday said murder was the more appropriate charge because the evidence showed that the real intent of the break-in was to kill Alicia, "with robbery as a mere afterthought."

Murder carries the penalty of death.

Ester a respondent

Velasco said Ester Ramos Bailey was now also considered a "respondent in the case."

Those charged with the offense yesterday were Joel Ablay, Michael Cenil, Robert Lumagui, Jun Maricar and other unknown persons.

Whether Leticia and Bailey will be included in the complaint will depend on how they would explain their actions during and after the killing in a preliminary investigation to be called next week.

In inviting Leticia, Velasco said he would like her to explain her actions after freeing herself.

"Without prejudging what she would say, we would like to ask about her reaction immediately after she came out of the house, why she did not immediately call the neighbors, why she did not shout etc.," he said.

Gov't psychiatrist

Yat said he would request the NBI not to interrogate Ester as this might worsen her condition. He said a government psychiatrist should be sent to assess Ester's condition.

Living with sisters

Ester is confined at the St. Claire hospital which is only a few meters away from the Boyle Street home that she shared with her sisters when she is lucid.

Lately, she had been spending more time at the hospital than at their home.

Yat said it would have been impossible for Lumagui to have seen Ester as only her sisters were allowed to visit her at the hospital.

He said Ester has been a regular patient at St. Claire since 2000. She was confined at another hospital for eight years before being brought to St. Claire.

He said it was Alicia who brought Ester to the hospital two days before she died. It was also Alicia who usually called him about Ester's recurring condition, he said.

Non-stop screaming

The doctor said Ester learned of Alicia's death the day after the killing.

"She was in denial for a while ... when the truth sank in, she screamed nonstop," Yat said.

He said Ester was very close to Alicia, more than to Leticia. Alicia visited the hospital twice a week and was Ester's closest friend and confidante, he said.

"She is grieving because she has lost the person closest to her," Yat said, adding that their younger sister Leticia was not as close to Ester as the slain diplomat.

Yat said he called up Ester's two sons in the United States and advised them to hire a lawyer because the situation was "bad."

Money not an issue

A close friend of Ester's told the INQUIRER in a separate interview that money could not have been an issue among the sisters.

"Ester loved them very much. She's proud of them," the friend said.

The friend explained that Ester's sisters gave her an allowance because she tended to spend all her money.

The friend added that Ester had once confided that one of the last things their mother told her was to take care of her sisters as she was the eldest.

"Ester told me: 'But how could I do that? I'm always at the hospital'," the friend said.

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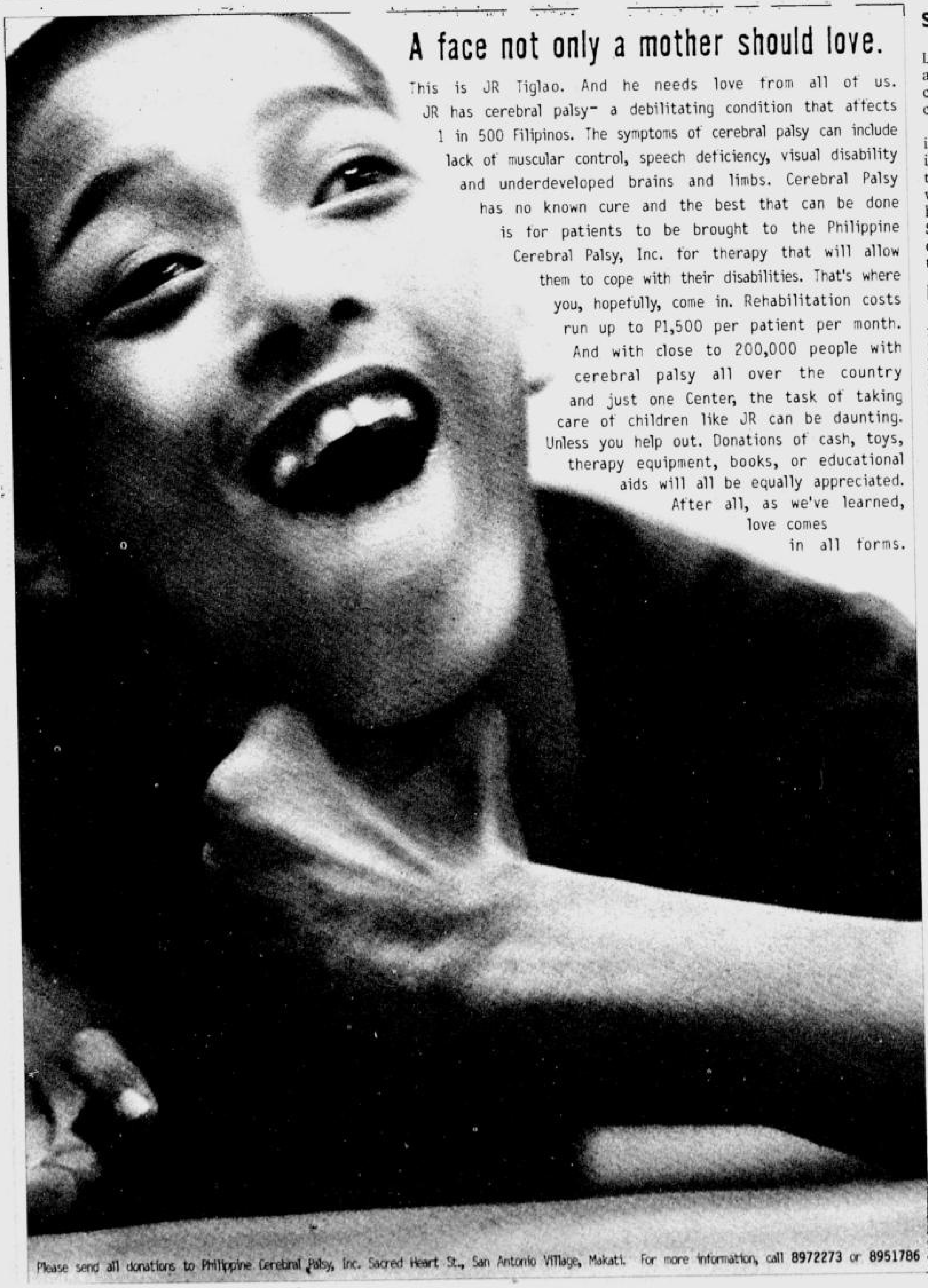
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The WORLD

Editor **Luverne B. Gueco**

Bomb blasts kill 64 in Iraq

TIKRIT, Iraq—At least 64 people were killed in a bloody wave of bomb blasts in Iraq Wednesday as US troops battled insurgents in the lawless western hinterland in a massive assault against Abu Musab al-Zarqawi's network.

At least four explosions in just an hour left trails of carnage in the northern towns of Tikrit and Hawijah and in the capital Baghdad, the deadliest attacks in a mounting wave of violence accompanying the formation of Prime Minister Ibrahim al-Jaafari's government earlier this month.

A first car bomb struck a busy market area in Saddam Hussein's hometown of Tikrit, killing 31, mostly civilians, and wounding 66, police said.

Mangled metal scraps, sandals and destroyed market stalls littered the blood-stained ground, an AFP reporter said. Strips of flesh splattered shop fronts near the site of the explosion.

"This is not *jihad* (holy war). There was no US patrol, no Iraqi police at the time of the blast. This car bomb tore civilians to shreds," said Zeid Hamad whose mobile telephone shop lies a few meters away from the blast site.

"Most of these people were waiting here to be hired as day laborers. They are looking for jobs, just trying to feed their families," he said.

A curfew was briefly slapped on Tikrit following the blast, and mosques blared out messages calling on residents of the small Sunni town 180 km north of Baghdad to donate blood for the wounded.

In another attack, a suicide bomber wearing a belt of explosives blew himself up outside an army recruitment center in the town of Hawijah, northeast of Tikrit, killing 30 people and wounding 31, police and hospital sources said.

Many of the dead could not immediately be identified, but were believed to be young men from outlying villages who had come to join the new Iraqi army, local hospital doctor Abdallah Yussef said.

Forty-six people, mostly police recruits were killed in a similar attack in the northern Kurdish city of Arbil on May 4.

Insurgents also detonated three car bombs in Baghdad. One targeting a police station in the restive southern district of Dura killed three people, an interior ministry official said.

Nine were wounded when a car bomb later exploded at a busy road intersection in the capital's upmarket Mansur district, the official said. Another car bomb went off in a western neighborhood of the capital but there no immediate casualty figures.

Car bombs have been the weapon of choice for insurgents who have stepped up their attacks in recent weeks, killing nearly 400 people since the start of the month.

The past few days have also been among the deadliest in months for US troops, with 15 dead between Saturday and Monday.

Security sources said rebels kidnapped Nawaf Raja Farhan al-Mahalawi, the governor of the restive western Sunni province of Al-Anbar where US forces are engaged in a large-scale operation to flush out insurgents.

Officials said rebels with ties to Zarqawi's network were using the governor as a bargaining chip as US forces pressed on with "Operation Matador," one of the largest post-Saddam military operations in Iraq.

The US military said its troops were encountering unusually tough resistance.

"There are reports that these people are in uniforms, in some cases are wearing protected vests, and there's some suspicion that their training exceeds that of what we have seen with other engagements further east," US Lt. Gen. James Conway, operations director of the Joint Staff, said in Washington. *AFP*

Japan considering pullout, reduction of troops in Iraq

TOKYO—After kissing their babies and hugging their wives, 200 Japanese soldiers in combat fatigues lined up at a base in central Japan last weekend under the "Rising Sun" flag for what has become a familiar ritual—the send-off for troops on their way to Iraq.

But this batch of soldiers may be among the last.

Nearly a year and a half into its most ambitious overseas military operation since World War II, Japan is now considering whether to join a growing list of countries pulling out or scaling back their operations in Iraq in the coming months.

A pullout by Japan would be a blow for US President George W. Bush, who is struggling to keep such coalition supporters as Italy and Poland on board.

Like many coalition partners, however, the troops' fate has presented Tokyo with a difficult dilemma.

Despite the strong backing of the deployment by popular Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi, public opinion remains deeply divided over whether the troops should have gone at all. Washington, meanwhile, is pushing hard for Japan's tightly restrained military to assume a more aggressive role overseas, meaning the Iraq mission's legacy will likely loom large for years to come.

Officials stressed on Tuesday that the future of the deployment would not be influenced by the suspected kidnapping of a Japanese security contractor—a former paratrooper with Japan's army—outside a US military base near Baghdad the day before.

"At the moment, it won't affect the activities of Self-Defense Forces in Samawah," the southern Iraq city where the troops are based, defense chief Yoshinori Ono said. He added the Defense Agency had confirmed the safety of its soldiers.

Still, Tokyo seems to be leaning toward a speedy withdrawal.

Ono told a news conference last week that the end of the year was being considered as a pullout date because that would coincide with the end of the UN mandate.

"We hope to turn over what the Self-Defense Forces are doing to the Iraqi people as soon as possible," Ono said. But he said the situation will be carefully reviewed to determine whether withdrawing is appropriate.

Tokyo could inform other coalition countries of its plans as early as September. After withdrawing, Tokyo is expected to focus its contribution on financial aid.

If it does withdraw, Japan would be following a trend.

Italian Premier Silvio Berlusconi has said he hoped Italian forces could begin returning by September—although he has said the decision would depend on the security situation and would be made in agreement with the United States and other allies.

Ukraine, the Netherlands and Spain have already begun pulling out. Poland—the fourth-largest contributor of troops to the US-led coalition, with 1,700 troops—is planning on calling home its main force at the end of the year unless the UN Security Council renews their mandate. *AP*

Iraqi governor seized, hostage crisis escalates

RAMADI, Iraq—Insurgents kidnapped the top official in Iraq's rebellious Anbar province on Tuesday and the deadline set by the captors of an Australian hostage passed with no word on his fate.

Raja Nawaf, who only became governor of Anbar a few days ago, was abducted with four bodyguards on the road from the town of Qaim, near the Syrian border, to the rebel stronghold of Ramadi, his brother, Hamed Nawaf, said.

The kidnappers, supporters of the al-Qaida leader in Iraq, Abu Musab al-Zarqawi, are demanding that Nawaf's tribe release some of the militant leader's followers it is holding, said Nawaf's brother and a member of the Ramadi city council.

Although it appears to be a tit-for-tat turf war, the fighting showed some Iraqis are putting up resistance to Zarqawi, whose followers have kidnapped and beheaded foreigners and launched suicide bomb attacks that have killed hundreds.

US forces said they too continued an offensive launched three days ago against rebels in Anbar, along the Euphrates River running from the Syrian border to Ramadi. They said they were meeting "significant resistance" from organized units.

The abduction of the Anbar governor underscored the complex security challenge facing Iraq's new government as it tries to tame lawless regions where Zarqawi's ruthless followers are taking on Iraqi security forces, American troops and tribes. *Reuters*

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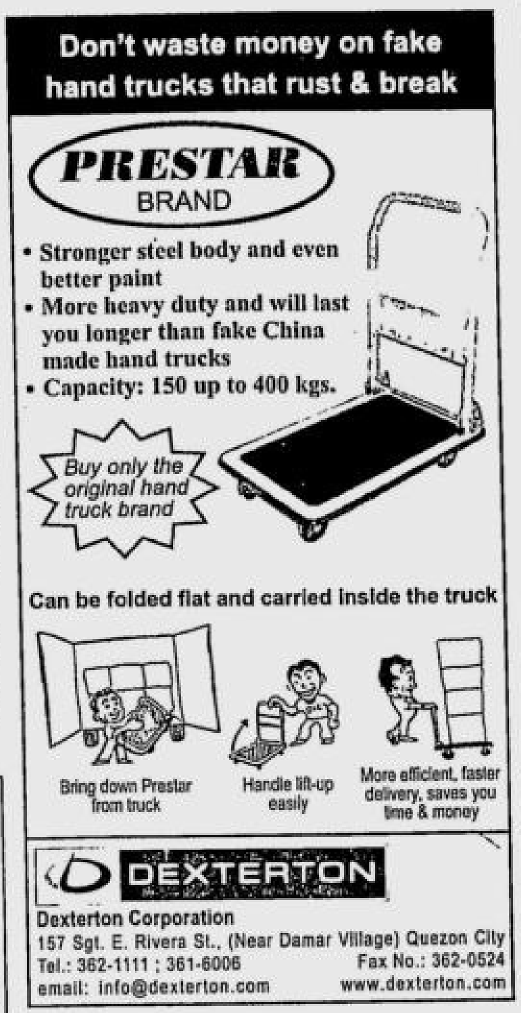
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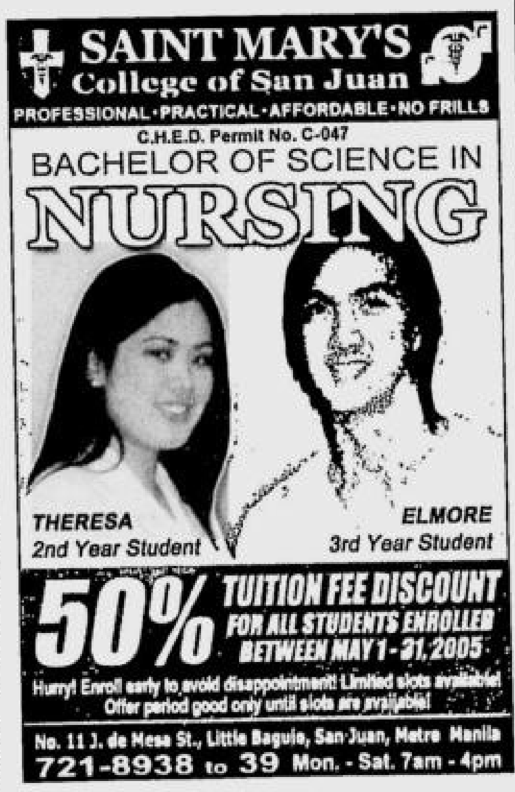
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US Senate approves $82-B war funds

WASHINGTON—The US military will get an infusion of money to buy urgently needed materials for combat operations in Iraq and Afghanistan under an $82 billion bill passed by the Senate on Tuesday that is headed for President George W. Bush's signature.

Congress completed work on the "emergency" spending bill when the Senate voted unanimously for a compromise measure, following passage by the House of Representatives last week.

Senate appropriations committee chair Thad Cochran, a Mississippi Republican, said the legislation was "of utmost importance to our troops who are deployed in the war on terror and for our allies in the world."

Bush praised Congress for its bipartisan support of the measure and said he was looking forward to signing it.

"I appreciate the leadership in the House and Senate for working together to reach a final agreement that focuses taxpayer dollars on providing our troops and diplomats with the tools they need," Bush said in a statement.

Congress had been under pressure from the Bush administration to promptly approve the spending bill. Without the money, the Pentagon said, it would run out of funding for some war accounts by the middle of this month.

Of the $82 billion, $76 billion would be funneled to the Pentagon to help it buy armor for soldiers and combat vehicles, ammunition, missiles and other war materials. The money also would be used to increase death benefits for families of soldiers killed in combat.

The "emergency" spending bill also provides $907 million in relief stemming from December's Indian Ocean tsunami and distributes foreign aid to several countries.

While Democrats unanimously supported the measure, they complained that Bush had failed to give Congress long-range estimates of the cost of the Iraq war or identified ways to offset those costs.

"We should not continue to fund the war through ad hoc emergency supplemental bills that are funneled through the Congress quickly when our troops are running out of funding," said Sen. Robert Byrd, a West Virginia Democrat.

The legislation calls on the Pentagon to give Congress estimates of war costs by assessing the number of American troops that will be deployed in Iraq through next year.

The Bush administration has argued that future war costs and troop strength will depend on conditions in Iraq that are impossible to predict.

While the Pentagon said the $76 billion will carry combat operations at least through Sept. 30, it has not said how much additional war funds will be needed beyond that date.

Including the newly approved money, the United States will have spent nearly $300 billion since late 2001 fighting wars in Afghanistan and Iraq. About two-thirds of that was for Iraq.

Democrats also criticized immigration law changes attached to the bill that make it harder for foreigners to seek asylum in the United States and denies all illegal aliens driver's licenses.

The Bush administration will also get $592 million to build a new embassy in Iraq. It would be the largest US compound in the world.

The measure would provide more funding for training Iraqi security forces, which Massachusetts Democrat Sen. Edward Kennedy said "is a key element of a successful strategy to stabilize Iraq and withdraw American forces."

Funds also would be dispatched to help Haiti with elections, to give economic assistance to Palestinians and for more food aid for various countries.

To strengthen domestic security, Congress approved funds for hiring more US border patrol agents and to build security fences along the US-Mexican border.

Some senators complained that the legislation did not do enough to strengthen northern border security or hire enough additional border patrol agents. *Reuters*

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FREAK ACCIDENT
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AP

Grenade reportedly thrown toward Bush during Georgia speech

WASHINGTON—A possible hand grenade was thrown close to US President George W. Bush on Tuesday as he gave a speech in front of tens of thousands of Georgians in Tbilisi, the US Secret Service said.

A Secret Service spokesperson said the agency was informed of the incident by Georgian officials.

The officials told the Secret Service the device was whisked from the scene by an alert Georgian security officer. US news reports here said the pin had been removed from the apparent grenade, which did not detonate.

"After the president departed the country of Georgia we were notified by host country authorities of a report that during the president's speech in Tbilisi a device described as a possible hand grenade was thrown within 30 meters of the stage," said Secret Service spokesperson Jonathan Cherry.

"It was reported that a device hit an individual in the crowd and the device fell to the ground," Cherry said.

"It was reported that a Georgian security officer picked up the device which did not detonate and removed it from the area," he said.

Bush was speaking before tens of thousands of cheering Georgians in Tbilisi's Freedom Square when the incident occurred.

Television footage of the event showed US Secret Service agents scrutinizing the dense crowd during Bush's speech.

NBC News, citing the Secret Service, said a Georgian officer "ran off" with the device after it was thrown and that it was "rendered safe and did not go off on its own." Citing a US official, the network said the grenade's safety pin had been removed.

"At this time we have not seen the reported device. We have agents on the ground in Tbilisi working with the FBI, state department and host country security authorities to look further into this report," Cherry said.

The US leader was safely back in the United States late Tuesday, after his presidential jet landed at Andrews Air Force base near Washington.

The White House did not speak with reporters about the incident on the president's plane en route to Washington. *AFP*

Jackson defen

SANTA MARIA, Calif.—Michael Jackson's ranch manager conceded on Tuesday that he lied when he told police that the singer never slept with children.

And in what was seen as a damaging admission by a defense witness, manager Joe Marcus acknowledged that Jackson had formed special bonds with a series of boys, including his accuser and "Home Alone" star Macaulay Culkin.

Outside the Santa Maria, California court, a Jackson spokesperson said Culkin, who has denied that he was molested by the 46-year-old superstar, will testify for the defense, which began presenting its case last week.

"Yes, I do expect he will be here at some point," Jackson spokesperson Raymone Bain told reporters, adding that defense lawyers would not disclose when they would call the former child star because they "don't want to give their strategy

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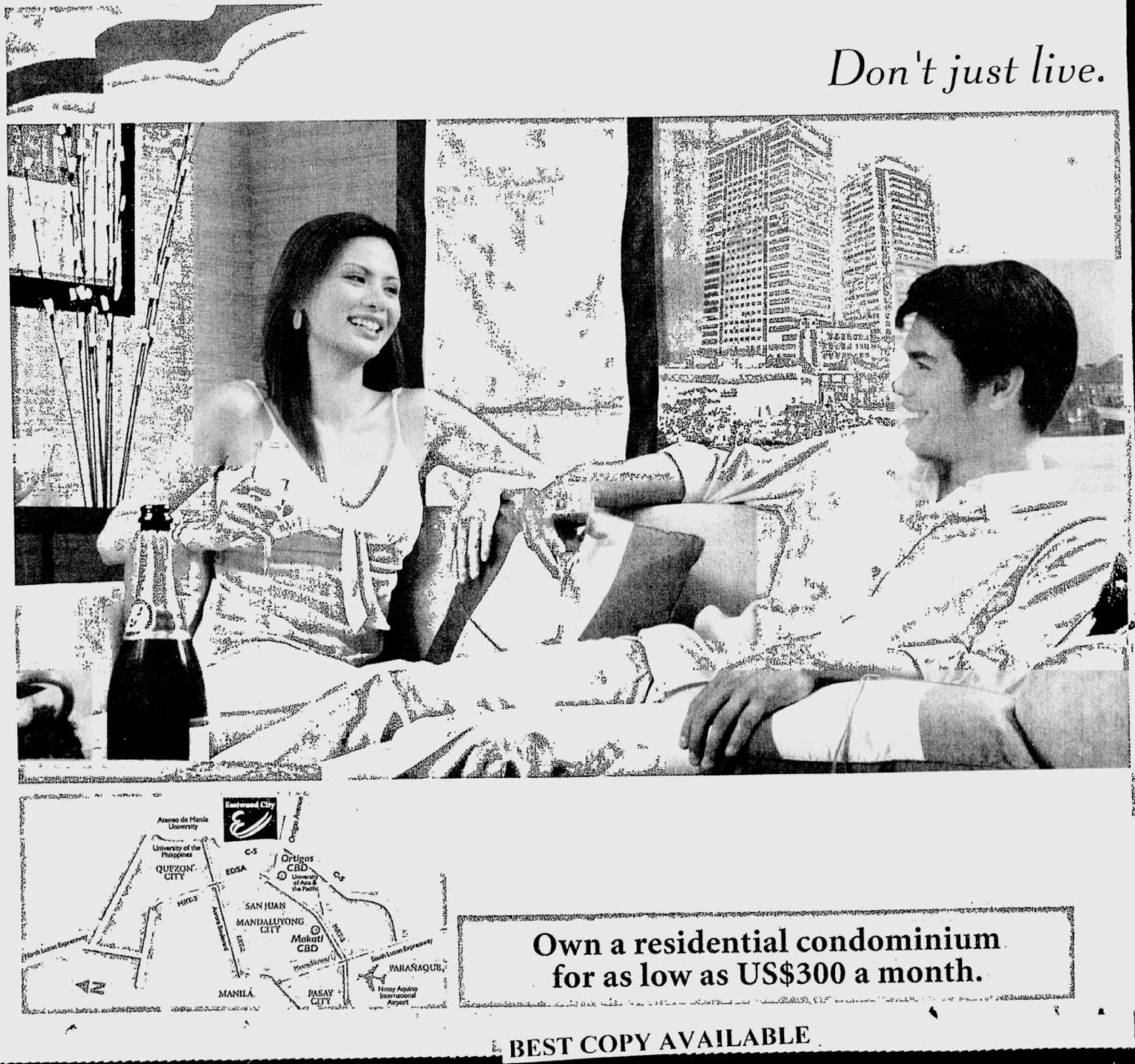

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Auchincloss, Marcus ac-
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." Marcus responded, be-
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of the sleepovers at the
s central California estate.

it was untrue, wasn't it?"
ncloss asked him.

h," Marcus said.

cus also conceded that his
s employer had formed a
l bond" with eight young
over the years, including
and the recovering cancer patient at the center of the trial.

"Mr. Jackson tends to form special bonds with some of these boys, true?" Auchincloss asked.

"Not just boys, but yes, I have seen bonds with children," Marcus said.

Prompted by Auchincloss to name girls with whom Jackson had been close, Marcus appeared to struggle before naming two, both sisters of boys who prosecutors say were targeted by the singer.

Asked whether Jackson had female friends aside from his two wives, Marcus again faltered before naming actress Elizabeth Taylor and singer Liza Minelli.

"So, we're up to two?" a sarcastic Auchincloss said, prompting an objection from defense lawyer Robert Sanger.

Marcus was called as a defense witness and appeared uncomfortable under cross-examination, often looking to Jackson before answering difficult questions.

"You keep looking at Mr. Jackson; why is that?" Auchincloss asked him at one point. An objection by Sanger prevented the witness from answering.

After Marcus testified that he had never seen Jackson with adult materials in front of children, Auchincloss confronted him with pictures of figurines of nearly naked women in bondage attire that were found on the pop star's desk during the raid.

Pressed by Auchincloss to admit that the dolls were "adult materials," Marcus looked for several seconds at Jackson and insisted that they were "artwork." Eventually he conceded that they were adult materials and inappropriate for children.

Jackson is charged with molesting his then-13-year-old accuser at Neverland, furnishing the boy with alcohol in order to abuse him and conspiring to commit false imprisonment, child abduction and extortion. *Reuters*

Taiwan politician rejects independence

BEIJING—A Taiwanese opposition leader on Wednesday rejected formal independence for Taiwan and called for Beijing and Taipei to make peace, saying they could dominate the coming century economically if they work together.

"Taiwan independence is a dead end," said James Soong in a speech at Tsinghua University, the alma mater of Chinese President Hu Jintao, whom he is to meet on Thursday.

But Soong also implicitly rejected Chinese threats to attack the island that Beijing claims as its territory. He said peace is the "common desire" of people on both sides of the Taiwan Strait.

Soong is the second Taiwanese opposition leader to visit the mainland within a month as part of Chinese efforts to contain activists who want Taiwan, which split with China in 1949 amid civil war, to make its independence permanent. Beijing is trying to forge ties with groups such as Soong's People First Party that favor uniting with the mainland.

"We should make China the manufacturing center for the world and also the most prosperous market in the whole world— not a battlefield," Soong said in comments that were punctuated by frequent applause.

"This is the Chinese century," Soong said. "The whole world is now waiting for the huge dragon, China, to take off... Are we Chinese people on both sides of the Taiwan Strait ready?"

China and Taiwan have no official relations and high-level contacts are rare.

Despite a lack of official ties, trade and indirect travel across the Taiwan Strait is booming. Taiwanese companies have invested more than $100 billion in the mainland.

Soong arrived last Thursday in the western city of Xi'an and traveled to Shanghai and the cities of Nanjing and Changsha before arriving in Beijing Tuesday.

He said the mainland could learn from Taiwan's economic development, which has raised annual incomes to $12,000-$14,000 per person.

By contrast, annual incomes in China's booming cities average about $1,000 per person, according to the government.

Lien Chan, head of Taiwan's main opposition group, the Nationalist Party, met with Hu on April 29 in the highest-level contact between the two sides since 1949.

Taiwanese President Chen Shui-bian has accused China of trying to use Soong's visit to influence an upcoming Taiwanese election.

On Saturday, Taiwanese are to elect delegates to an assembly that will vote on proposed reforms including whether to allow public referendums to amend the island's constitution. Beijing fears that could lead to a public vote on Taiwanese independence. *AP*

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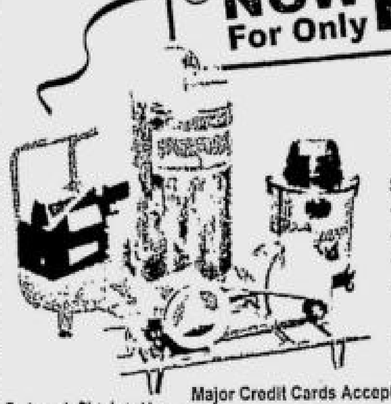

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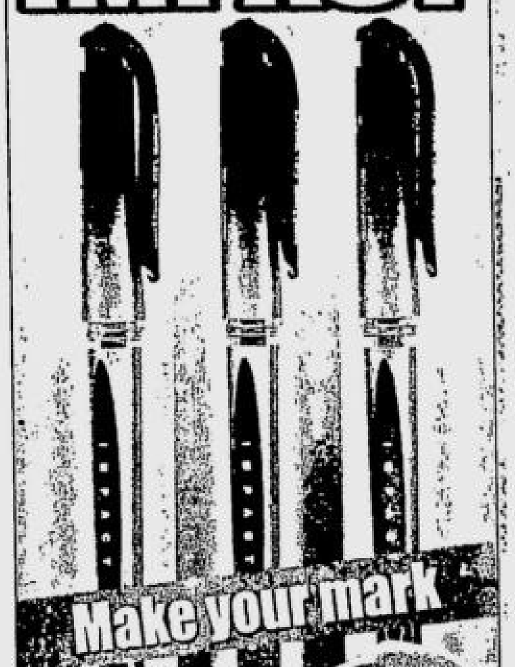

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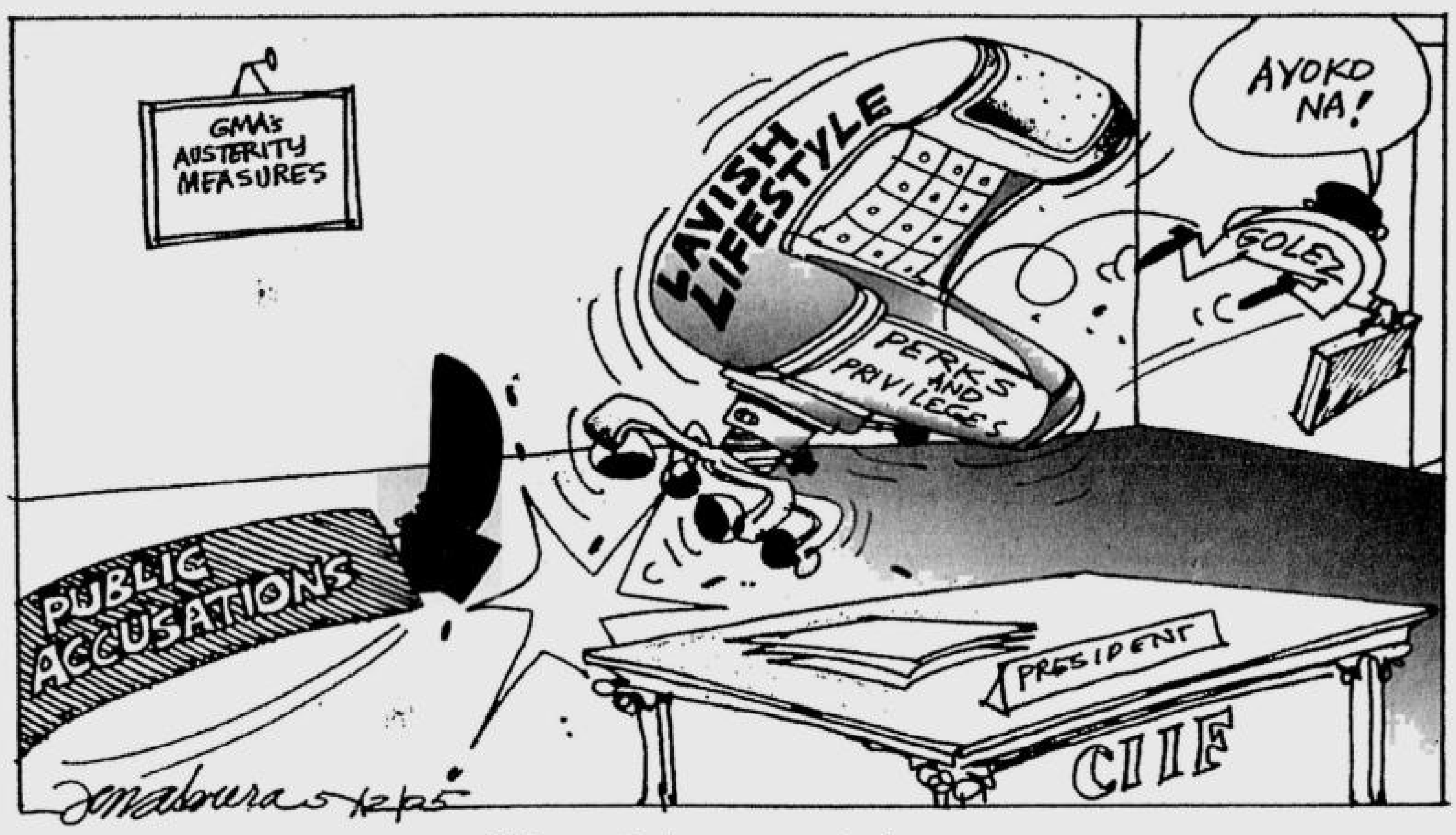

End of the road?

EDITORIAL

ARCHBISHOP Oscar Cruz of Lingayen and Dagupan says he has been hearing voices lately—and they are not coming from heaven, but from his cell phone. He strongly suspects the voices and echoes are tell-tale signs that his telephone conversations are being tapped.

Which may not be a such bad thing, considering that he has also been receiving death threats over both his cell phone and his land line. Maybe, the people listening in to his conversations may yet unwittingly discover the identities of those who are threatening his life. But that is presuming that those who are doing the tapping are not the same people who are making those threats. And the possibility that they are the same seems very high.

Cruz has been in the news these days with his denunciations of the unabated operations of *jueteng* syndicates. He claims the illegal numbers game is more widespread today than during the time of the disgraced president, Joseph Estrada. The pay-offs to police and other public officials, he says, total P13 billion yearly. He has submitted to Congress a list of 14 *jueteng* lords, their areas of operation and the payola they set aside for the authorities to look the other way. Reportedly on the list are five governors, one vice governor, a mayor and several individuals whose names have always been associated with *jueteng* for many years now.

With that kind of money, it is not difficult to comprehend why some people would threaten and even eliminate anyone who stands in the way. Thus, anyone or everyone on the list could be behind the campaign of intimidation against Cruz.

And so are those who are on their payroll of the *jueteng* lords. Cruz said in one television interview that some very high officials in the national government were getting about P20 million monthly from the gambling syndicates. He seems to have narrowed his suspects to those in government, saying he has "A-1 information" that the government has facilities to tap all types of phone calls. It also has the expertise and experience, it may be added.

But why would they bother to threaten Cruz and tap his phones? The archbishop obviously doesn't scare easily so they can't expect to muzzle him with their death threats. At best, all they would get from spying on him are the identities of his sources.

They have very little to fear about Cruz's list. In its present form, the list has very limited value and uses. Cruz himself admits that his sources are second-hand, and that the information he and his Krusada ng Bayan Laban sa Jueteng gathered would not stand in court. They need to be "validated" by the authorities, he has said.

For all the publicity it has generated, Cruz's crusade has been a disappointment. Getting the names of *jueteng* lords is not enough; regular patrons can easily rattle off their names. To be effective, to be worthy of the name, a crusade has to produce more. To say they don't have intelligence funds for gathering evidence against the operators and their protectors is a poor excuse.

Everyone in the group should have known that crushing this scourge is not going to be a walk in the park. That should have been clear from the bribery and graft cases against Estrada. Despite the testimony of Gov. Chavit Singson, the self-confessed bagman, and a host of other witnesses, despite all the documents in the government's possession, the prospect of getting a guilty verdict against Estrada seems to grow dimmer every day. So how could Cruz and his crusaders expect to advance farther with so much less?

Now the archbishop has been reduced to pleading with President Macapagal-Arroyo to order a stop to the numbers game. "If the President would directly say no to *jueteng*, stop *jueteng*, away with *jueteng*, then it's over," he said.

That could very well be true. But what happens if she doesn't want to displease some old supporters and political allies? What if she agrees with some police officers that payola from *jueteng* is needed to supplement the meager budget for police operations as well as the modest incomes of favored PNP officials? What if she ignores the call, as she seems inclined to do at the moment? Will it be end of the road for the crusade against *jueteng*?

Cruz seems to think so. And the *jueteng* lords and their patrons and protectors couldn't be happier.

Hey, big spenders

VIEWPOINT

Juan L. Mercado

A COUNTRY of crushing needs, like the Philippines requires, in addition to bread, "models of limited wants."

Rolando Golez of the Coconut Industry Investment Fund never grasped that truth. Not even when former Presidential Commission on Good Government Chair Haydee Yorac flayed him, as only Yorac can, for jet-setting profligacy. "It was good this has been exposed," the straight-as-an-arrow Budget Secretary Emilia Boncodin said.

Until his "resignation," Golez was apparently befuddled by the firestorm that his multimillion peso perks whipped up. He was not the first official to splurge while 29 out of every 1,000 ill-fed infants here never reach their first birthdays.

Other big spenders are equally confused. That includes government corporation directors, who rehired themselves after dipping into retirement funds. "Why should I apologize for a godly act?" wondered Imelda Marcos, probably the queen of high-rollers in previous years.

Ferdinand Marcos and his cronies extorted, in the name of the "New Society," levies from impoverished coconut farmers. Today's coco officials burned that blood money with abandon. Thousands of small farmers have died without even getting a centavo in dividends for their levies.

But Golez and Company won't be the last of the wastrels. Many "leaders" in government, business, even church, still ignore Mahatma Gandhi's counsel: "Reduce your wants. Produce your needs."

"We do not see Lazarus at the gate," National Scientist Dioscoro Umali wrote. "The lethargy, fatigue and apathy that result from malnutrition are so widespread we take them for 'normal.' Human needs do not wring from us the compassion that expresses itself in commitment."

This is blindness of the heart. *"Walang mainam na bulag / Na di gaya noong nagbubulagbulagan,"* the old Tagalog proverb says. There are none so blind as those who refuse to see.

It ignores even the constitutional edict which says, "The use of property bears a social function...(and all economic activity should) contribute to the common good." Such provisions seek to curb elites who often batten on the weak. The richest 10 percent here corral 36 centavos out of every peso. The poorest 10 percent make do with three centavos.

This skewed wealth buys better nutrition, extensive health services, near universal education, not to mention summer homes, vacations abroad—for the elite. As a result, they'll live on average almost a generation longer than the poor.

No one begrudges longer life for anybody. But what rankles is the stacked "ovarian lottery" that ensues. A kid born in Tawi-Tawi, will have a life expectancy of little more than 50 years. That is comparable to Africa's Togolese. But in Manila and environs, the child could live to over 72 years—nearer the 79 years Canadians enjoy.

Forty-one out of 1,000 children in Basilan, Lanao Sur, Maguindanao, Sulu and Tawi-Tawi—or the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao—die at birth, reports INQUIRER's Nash Maulana. It is only 24 in Thailand and four in Malaysia.

These untimely deaths are preventable. But only if the resources that wastrels grab today are shared. The consequent denial of life itself is an obscene injustice. Do our big spenders consider these facts for what they are: sentences to premature graves?

Thus, we need, as Pope John Paul stressed, "a community-based society with a great openness and sensitivity to the needs of their neighbors."

To strip away our blinders, scientists like the Nobel Laureate Amartya Sen and Mahbub Ul Haq crafted human development indicators. They can gauge more precisely the human condition than the old yardsticks of gross national product or per capita income.

Nonetheless, blindness toward neighbor waters down accountability and rides tandem with scornful indifference. Joseph Estrada's "disdainful attitude toward the poor came out in unguarded moments," his former Chief of Staff Aprodicio Laquian recalls in "The Erap Tragedy: Tales from the Snake Pit.

"When accusations were made that the customs bureau had allocated smuggled sardines to the First Lady's charitable programs, Erap angrily retorted: 'My family does not eat sardines'... unfeeling of the true conditions of the poor as Marie Antoinette's 'Let them eat cake.'"

This century has seen an information explosion, symbolized by the cell phone. Media have shown people that their deprived lives and early graves are not inevitable.

This knowledge unlocks aspirations of immense force, since the disparity affects life itself. Hopes will boil over into demands for reform of an unjust society.

The press also documents how reform suffers from lip service or outright obstruction. President Macapagal-Arroyo's post-election patronage appointments underscore this.

Service atrophies from bureaucratic sludge. Token reforms injected within skewed wealth, stokes tensions further—and lower the threshold for violence. Watch the fronts muscle their way into the coco levy issue, hoping they can dip into the tills.

Splurging is criminal when most people are going hungry. Worse, profligate officials deny an impoverished people examples of appetites held in check by values beyond bank balances. United Coconut Planters Bank's Jose Perez pledges the probe into big spenders will continue. This we have to see.

Continued passing by of society's wounded, as the proverbial priest and the Levite did, sows the wind. If we persist, we will reap the whirlwind.

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Truths

THERE'S THE RUB

Conrado de Quiros

IN A PROFESSION known for brawn, he has shown brains. In far more ways than one.

Steve Nash was the only NBA player who made his opposition to the Iraq war known, and in a rather conspicuous way. He did so in the NBA All-Star Game last year, wearing a shirt that said: "No War-Shoot for Peace."

"I believe us going to war would be a mistake," he said. "We haven't found any nuclear weapons, no matter what anyone says—and that process is still under way. Until that's finished and decided, I don't think war is acceptable."

He lamented media wildly beating the drums of war. "I think a lot of what we hear in the news is misleading and flat-out false, so I think it's important for us to think deeper and find out what is really going on."

He cautioned against knee-jerk patriotism. "I'm still trying to educate myself. And I think people should just go out and try to educate themselves and learn so they can make an informed decision."

His comments drew a strong backlash. NBA officials criticized him for saying those things in the wrong forum, tainting sports with politics. Former San Antonio Spurs center, David Robinson, a former naval officer said: "The time for debate is beforehand. Obviously history will speak on whether this was the right thing or the wrong thing, but right now (the soldiers) are out there. Support 'em. There's plenty of time for commentary later."

Nash refused to back down. "From the start, I spoke out just because I don't want to see the loss of life. People are mistaking anti-war as being unpatriotic. This has nothing to do with the fact that I'm from Canada. This is a much bigger issue. But now that we're in battle, I hope for as many lives to be spared as possible, (and) as little violence as possible before a resolution."

Robinson was right about one thing. History did speak on whether the war was the right thing or the wrong thing, and far more swiftly than he thought. It became patent almost immediately that it wasn't a principled war but barefaced aggression, and the real worry was not how many American soldiers would lose their lives but how many innocent Iraqi children would lose theirs. Only a handful of Americans died—until much later when the Iraqis rose in revolt at the occupation and waged a war of liberation against it. Thousands of Iraqis did.

I couldn't be happier that Nash was voted Most Valuable Player of the NBA this year.

I remember Paul Newman once saying about Ronald Reagan, "He was a bad actor, he'll be a bad president." He was right on both counts. At least Reagan was a bad president for the rest of the world, supporting tyrants overseas left and right as he did, including Marcos, even if he was good for Americans, ushering a period of relative affluence for them in the 1980s. The one was probably intricately linked to the other—supporting tyrants has been good for America, but that is another story. Well, Steve Nash has been a great basketball player, he'll be a great person. It works the other way around too.

Nash went over to the Phoenix Suns last year after Dallas balked at matching the Suns' offer—$65 million over five years—and turned it almost overnight from a team looking up from the cellar to one looking down from the ceiling. The Suns won a record 62 games this season, giving it home-court advantage for the rest of the playoffs. It went on to rout first-round opponent Memphis, 4-0, after everyone predicted its fortunes would plummet after the regular season. Well, everyone said, too, that the Suns people were fools to offer Nash the kind of money they did. It turned out to be the bargain of the year—yes, even compared to the monumental bargain Miami got with Shaquille O'Neal.

Just as he gave his fellow players a glimpse of the truth about the Iraq war, so Nash gave his fellow players a glimpse of the truth about basketball. A truth that seems to have been lost in the NBA, with all the hoopla and moolah that have surrounded its stars. That is that basketball is not won on the strength of individual talent, however vast the talent. It is won on the strength of teamwork, however shallow the bench.

Phoenix does not have exceptional players, not even in Amare Stoudemire—he's great, but he's not Iverson or Bryant or McGrady. But it has exceptional teamwork. Largely due to Nash, who has provided its spark. He is, as his own teammates have pointed out (and as the fans themselves have seen), not just the motor that sends his team roaring full speed ahead but the nuts and bolts that keep its "structural integrity"—to borrow a phrase from Star Trek, as the Enterprise strains at warp speed—intact.

What sets Nash apart is the same thing that sets Michael Jordan apart from the many other players who have dazzled the world with their athleticism: He makes his teammates better. Jordan made Pippen, Rodman and Kukoc play like champions, something they never did again after he retired. Nash makes Stoudemire, Marion and Jackson play like, well, they can be champions this year, with luck and pluck. Jordan, of course, was himself an extraordinary athlete. Nash is not, but that only makes him so much easier to identify with. "Here's a guy who's no different from these kids sitting in the gyms, 14 and 15-year-olds that I talk to," says Leo Rautins, coach of the Canadian basketball team. "Steve didn't have any more talent, jumping ability, quickness, size, anything than a lot of these kids, but he just worked his tail off to get where he is, to now get MVP. To me that's such an attainable something now for these kids to grasp."

Nash quite incidentally said he would have voted for Shaq as MVP, saying he thought Shaq was more deserving of the award. There he was dead wrong. But he is right about yet one thing:

Nice guys don't have to finish last.

More wonders of Cape Town

POLITICAL TIDBITS

Belinda Olivares-Cunanan

CAPE Town, South Africa—The autumn weather has been more often grey than sunny. It was thus frustrating when our son Buddy drove us one afternoon to Bloubergstrand 15 kilometers across the other side of the Cape, where he said we'd get the best view of the flat-top Table Mountain; but it was so cloudy. The "tablecloth" had been spread out all over the Table, as the locals would say. Last Tuesday morning, however, the sun came out brilliantly; after breakfast, we rushed to line up for the cable car that would take us to the top of the mountain. Unfortunately, dozens of other people had the same idea. But the queueing was worth it; the view from the summit of Table Mountain was just spectacular: Cape Town's long stretches of wide white-sand beaches, the blue Atlantic and the glistening city below. It's said that the ultimate in the summer days is to sip Cape wine from the summit as one watches the sun sink into the Atlantic.

* * *

In the distance, we could see the maximum-security prison of Robben Island, Cape Town's "Alcatraz," where the legendary Nelson Mandela, South Africa's first democratically elected president, was imprisoned for 27 years, 18 of them in solitary confinement. Facing Table Mountain daily must have been a frightful torture for him, for as a book, "Majestic Southern Africa," puts it, it was "tantalizingly close but almost impossible to reach."

* * *

As we went up Table Mountain by cable car, we saw up close its fantastic layering of rocks of various hues. Geologists believe that mountain-building began in earnest in the entire Cape Peninsula about 280 million years ago, in river deltas formed after the ice had melted, and this continued for nearly another 100 million years. They also believe that the granite mountains—one of them Table Mountain—were coughed up from the seas in a series of "geological paroxysms." Table Mountain is believed to have been already an isolated feature some 40 million years ago, when the sea completely covered the Cape Flats area.

* * *

To my layman's mind, this submersion in water for over millions of years explains Table Mountain's incredible rock-layering which, apart from its unique flat top, makes it so beautiful. But this phenomenon also makes the Cape Peninsula, from Cape Town all the way to the Cape of Good Hope, home to an extraordinary number of living things, especially plants. In fact, the Cape has some 2,600-odd species of plants, believed to be as many as in the whole of North America and Europe combined. Of those 2,600-odd species, some 1,500 are found around the slopes of Table Mountain. Since 1913, these have been cared for in one of the great botanical gardens of the world, the Kirstenbosch National Botanic Gardens, on the mountain's eastern slope. Kirstenbosch, in fact, is one of Unesco's six World Heritage Sites in South Africa. Guidebooks list it as an absolute must-to-visit.

* * *

After descending from Table Mountain, we headed for this magnificent botanical garden where centuries-old trees, rare South African species and manicured lawns (where people sat with picnic baskets) can be found. In the summer, concerts of all sorts are held there, with Table Mountain serving as a magnificent backdrop and the rich foliage all around, especially a most attractive species called "silver trees" whose leaves seem to shimmer in the sunlight. We discovered to our delight a signboard that said that the camphor trees there were planted by Sir Cecil John Rhodes. The huge trees make a fabulous backdrop for photos and we had a grand time posing. I thought, where do we find a Filipino Rhodes who can develop Mt. Makiling into a world-class botanical garden?

* * *

Our visit to Kirstenbosch is a good occasion to talk about Cecil John Rhodes (1853-1902), one of the great empire-builders for Britain's Queen Victoria. He served as prime minister of the Cape from 1890-1896, but he made his substantial fortune in diamond mining at Kimberley in the central part of South Africa. It is said, however, that Rhodes' greatest dream was to forge a Cape-Cairo railway, to serve as a "tangible symbol of British dominion in Africa." He was the last private owner of the land where Kirstenbosch now stands—he bought it in 1895 for 9,000 pounds, in order to protect the eastern slope of Table Mountain from urban development. He also donated large tracts of land to set up the University of Cape Town. That was the kind of visionary Rhodes was. He died in 1902, and his remains are buried in the Matopos Hills in next-door Zimbabwe, formerly called Rhodesia after him. Many decades after his death, Rhodes' legacy lives on in the field of education: scores of students from all over the world have over the years become "Rhodes scholars" in the United Kingdom. Among them were President Kennedy's secretary of state, Dean Rusk, and a young law graduate from Arkansas named Bill Clinton.

* * *

Close to sunset, we drove back to Table Mountain, this time toward the western slope facing the sea. This slope features a whole series of granite ridges of almost equal height and size, believed to have been formed by river erosions along fault lines and fractures in the Earth's crust millions of years ago. Because there are 12 ridges lined up one after another, these were promptly labeled the "Twelve Apostles." Normally greyish brown in color, the "Twelve Apostles" turn gold as the setting sun strikes them. Truly a magnificent sight to behold from the shores. No wonder Sir Francis Drake, the great Elizabethan explorer, after seeing the wonders of the Cape, was moved to say it was "the fairest cape and the most shapely thing we saw in the whole circumference of the earth."

Will Malacañang let down Aetas to favor CDC?

HUMAN FACE

Ma. Ceres P. Doyo

FIRST the good news. Praise be to the National Commission on Indigenous Peoples (NCIP) for taking the side of the Aetas of Mabalacat, Pampanga, and Bamban, Tarlac, by honoring their ancestral land claim. The NCIP even increased the original claim of 5,515 hectares granted by the Department of Environment and Natural Resources in 1997 to more than 10,000 hectares in 2004.

The bad news is that the Clark Development Corp. (CDC) has been contesting this since the beginning. And pressures from Malacañang, through a directive sent around September 2004, prompted the NCIP to hold in abeyance the awarding of the Certificate of Ancestral Domain Title (CADT).

Next week, starting May 19, a revalidation process will again be done, even as Aeta beneficiaries are protesting. For after a century of struggle, since the Americans occupied Aeta land and turned it into a huge military base, the Aetas thought victory was theirs. The Aetas are in for a rude awakening if their own government will let them down.

Here are some facts from NCIP documents.

As mentioned in historical accounts, in the 1700s, during the days when bravery was the highest virtue in the land, Juanico, the son of Arap the Aeta, was chosen to lead the clan in what is now known as San Nicolas.

A Spanish document (obtained from the Bureau of Archives) containing a descriptive report corresponding to the year 1891 and the creation of Tarlac attests to the occupancy of the Aetas. On page 3 of the English translation, it says that the Negritos and Balugas were nomads living on the mountains located west of Capas and Bamban.

From 1900 to 1950, during the American occupation, many parts of the Aeta ancestral domains were taken as part of the US military camps (Fort Stotsenburg later renamed Clark Field Military Reservation). However, in manifest recognition of the rights to these lands, the Americans did not prevent the Aetas from cultivating their lands within the areas taken as reservation. For 50 years, it was exclusively the Aetas who were cultivating lands within the areas taken as military camp.

As early as 1975, the Aetas of Mabalacat and Bamban wrote petitions for the recognition of their ancestral land to then President Ferdinand Marcos. This was reiterated some time in 1982 and 1983, when they filed a "petition for exclusion of 2,628 hectares from coverage of the Sacobia Development Authority projects for exclusive Negrito Resettlement Site, Negrito ancestral lands of Bamban from pre-hispanic era to present." Their petitions did not yield results.

On March 14, 1993, the Department of Environment and Natural Resources issued Department Administrative Order (DAO) No. 2 for the identification, recognition and delineation of ancestral lands/domains claims of Indigenous Peoples. The Bamban Aeta Tribal Association, representing several other Aeta communities in Tarlac, filed an application. Their claim was processed.

The DENR approved the Aetas' claim and issued R03-CADC-107 dated Nov. 21, 1997 over 5,515 hectares within the area of Bamban.

On Jan. 13, 1998, Romeo S. David, president and CEO of CDC wrote then Executive Secretary Alexander Aguirre requesting that the CADC 107 be declared null and void. Aguirre formed a Joint Action Team (JAT) to look into CADC 107. The JAT findings on the extent of the ancestral domain more or less tallied with what the DENR had approved.

With the birth of the Indigenous Peoples Rights Act in 1997, a petition for the conversion of the same into Certificate of Ancestral Domain Title (CADT) was filed by the Aetas. Processing of the petition of turning CADC to CADT (from claim to title) were done from Jan. 2003 to April 2004. Publication of the technical description (and an erratum) and map of the claim was likewise done last year.

The petition was then heard by the NCIP en banc on Oct. 6, Nov. 9 and 12, 2004.

On Nov. 24, 2004, the CDC manifested its intention to question the NCIP's approval of the claim and the CADT issuance.

With pressures from Malacañang, the NCIP held in abeyance the awarding of the CADT and entered into negotiations with the CDC, under the auspices of the Department of Land Reform (DLR). The CDC wanted the ancestral domain to cover only 1,600 hectares.

Consequently, the NCIP, CDC and DLR agreed that a revalidation of the area and the beneficiaries of the CADT shall be conducted by the three agencies. (The Clark Special Economic Zone covers 28,041 hectares; the CADT area is 10,684 hectares. The number of Aeta beneficiaries is 2,973.)

Aeta beneficiaries of the CADT have appealed to President Macapagal-Arroyo saying that there is no basis for the claim of the CDC that only 1,600 hectares should be awarded to them. They are also opposing the revalidation of the CADT, since the period prescribed has lapsed. Under the IPRA, the law provides for a 15-day period (after publication) for opposing the claim. Under the same law, the CDC should have brought the decision of the NCIP to the Court of Appeals, not to the Office of the President or the DLR.

Here's a sentence from an NCIP document: "Said ownership by the Aeta tribe of the area known as Clark is undisputed and uncontroverted."

An NCIP source said that the area covered by the Aetas' ancestral domain should first be established and then awarded once and for all. And if portions of the domain have to be used by the CDC, then a memorandum of agreement should be made by the parties concerned.

In the Visayas, the brewing issue between the Aetas and private land developers in the hip party island of Boracay is something to watch. More on this another time.

Send comments to cerespd@info.com.ph

Victory in Europe

THE LONG VIEW

Manuel L. Quezon III

ON May 4, 1945, Field Marshal Bernard Montgomery of Britain accepted the surrender of the German army. But the formal surrender of the German government still had to take place. German officers tasked with representing their defeated government delayed this as long as they could, to permit the escape of their soldiers and citizens from Russian-controlled areas to the West. Western leaders were getting impatient.

Finally, on May 7, 1945, Gen. Alfred Jodl signed the unconditional surrender of all German land, sea and air forces. The official end of hostilities was set at one minute before midnight on May 8, 1945.

Marshal Joseph Stalin, head of the Soviet Union, angry that he hadn't been consulted, demanded that the Germans surrender all over again. This, the Germans did; along the way, the Western allies of Russia were made to postpone their announcements of victory to May 8, and proclaim "V-E" or Victory in Europe Day on May 9. Gregor Dallas, in his magnificent book, "Poisoned Peace: 1945—The War that Never Ended," summarized the ensuing snafu as follows:

"The Soviets informed the British and American governments that they would not be making an official announcement until Wednesday, 9 May, and that would be considered 'VE-Day'; the idea was intolerable to Churchill; people were already celebrating in London's streets on Monday. On Monday evening the BBC announced that Tuesday would be a holiday and was officially declared 'VE-Day'; the Prime Minister would be addressing the nation (with the speech he had prepared for Sunday) at three o'clock, Tuesday afternoon. Immediately the French announced that [General Charles] de Gaulle would be addressing the French nation and the world at exactly the same hour. Truman would speak from the White House at 9 a.m., Eastern Standard Time, which corresponded to 3 p.m. in London and Paris. Thus, in Germany, 'Defeat Day' was Monday, 'VE-Day' in the West was Tuesday, and in the Soviet Union it was Wednesday."

And so on May 8, 1945, Winston Churchill, Charles de Gaulle, and Harry Truman spoke to their people and the world almost simultaneously. Dallas writes that the greatest celebration was held in New York City, which "went mad": it had been going mad a day before the official announcement and until a day after—a total of three days of wild celebration, from May 7 to 9. Crowds gathered outside the White House. Churchill, in London, was mobbed on his way to Parliament, where he asked (in true Churchillian style) "That this House do now attend at the Church of St. Margaret, Westminster, to give humble and reverend thanks to Almighty God for our deliverance from the threat of German domination. This is the identical Motion which was moved in former times." After the service, Churchill appeared on the balcony of Buckingham Palace and was deliriously cheered by his countrymen.

In Paris, an American bomber flew under the Eiffel Tower! That evening, the monuments of Paris were lit by red, white and blue lights as on the proclamation of Allied Victory in World War I on Nov. 11, 1918.

Moscow stayed silent until Stalin spoke the next day. Just after 1 a.m. on May 9, 1945, Radio Moscow announced that victory had been achieved. Moscow went wild; people danced in the streets. That evening, a salvo of "a thousand guns" was fired prior to Stalin's speech. In the months that followed, there would be victory parades, but the grandest victory parade of all was held in Moscow. Russian writer, Tatyana Shvetsova describes it:

"On June 24, 1945 the Victory Parade took place in Moscow. Marshal Georgy Zhukov reviewed the troops, Marshal Konstantin Rokossovsky was in command…

"The ceremony of the parade included an episode, which lasted for only a few minutes, but remained in people's memory thanks to documentaries.

"Accompanied by the beat of drums, 200 participants in the war marched to the Lenin mausoleum in Red Square and threw Nazi banners at its door. There were about 200 such banners. The honor of throwing Hitler's personal banner on the cobblestones of Red Square had been bestowed on Senior Sergeant Fyodor Legkoschur who had been wounded in action more than once.

"It was raining heavily during the parade, and the Nazi banners were soaked in pools of water."

This year, there was no raining on the parade, because the Russian air force seeded the clouds over Moscow, ensuring the skies were clear. That the greatest celebration of the Allied victory in World War II should be held in Moscow points to a victory, too, for the Russian interpretation of the true end of the war in Europe: it ended when the Soviet Union said it did, not a day before. Indeed, as one news item put it, "For Russia, the victory in Europe is a moment of almost holy moral clarity and finality."

The world marveled at the sight of an American president waving from the walls of the Kremlin, where Stalin's successors had waved at Soviet troops prepared to go to war against the United States generation after generation. There, too, were the leaders of a Germany united only in the final days of the old Soviet system, and of Japan. It was, in a sense, the first coming together not only of the victors but of the vanquished with the nations that had triumphed over them.

In Moscow, part of the victory celebration was a large orange and yellow wall where visitors could scribble messages to the veterans of World War II. A Russian teenager wrote, "Thank you for the victory."

This year's 60th anniversary celebration has been the grandest since the 50th anniversary in 1995. It will probably be the last to be celebrated in such a grandiose manner; there are few veterans left to thank.

Faded picture

YOUNG BLOOD

Snowhite

We want to know what the young are thinking about. What are their thoughts on current issues? We welcome contributions from the twentysomething and below.—Ed.

IT is with great longing that I look at his old picture, the only one I have kept all these years. As I trace the contours of his face with my fingers, I have a wistful smile on my face. I look at the long nose, courtesy of his half-Spanish father and half-Mexican grandfather, the piercing eyes, the moles that are barely visible in the faded picture, and the black wavy hair I used to run my fingers through. And for the hundredth time, I almost burst into tears again.

The picture may be old and faded, but the hard planes and angles of his face are imprinted in my memory. That face has always been a part of me. And looking at it always makes me cry.

It has been seven months since I last saw him. It has been seven agonizing months since he and his mistress ripped my heart apart, leaving me suffering and never forgetting. It has been seven long months and yet here I am, longing to talk to him, to hug him again and to tell him how much I love him.

Words fail me every time I hear his voice on the other line. The words, the things I have always wanted to tell him, are stuck in my throat every time I am able to summon the courage to talk to him on the phone.

My friends keep asking how am I coping. And even as I declare that I no longer care about him, they know that up to this very day, I am hurting.

My cousin evades my question every time I ask her how he and the other woman are doing. And how's their kid, of course. His kid. How can I forget the kid whose tiny hands were tugging at him that day?

My siblings are extra cautious about bringing up his name during our conversations. Mom has been trying to make me see the reasons for what he did, often to my great irritation. But it is my Mom who really understands the pain I continue to endure.

My aunts and uncles, on the other hand, are just too happy that it happened. I know they prayed to all the saints in heaven that I would finally see him for the kind of man that he is. And their prayers were answered.

During the first three months after that fateful day, I was crying myself to sleep almost every night. I suppressed the urge to look at his picture on my night table. The memory of that day when I saw him with his mistress after his long absence kept haunting me.

It happened one beautiful day as I was walking with my cousin to the bazaar nearest our lola's house. I had even asked her in jest what would happen if we were to bump suddenly into them. We had already heard rumors that he was living with his mistress, which could explain why we hadn't seen him for most of my month-long vacation. As we neared the bazaar, I was already feeling uneasy. I could sense it the minute I started examining the new arrivals of *ukay-ukay*, testing the feel of the fabrics against my skin.

I should have bolted for the nearest exit the minute I heard his voice, lovingly admonishing the little girl to stop running around and playing. And I should have slapped him in the face when he introduced to me, all too casually, the dark-eyed beauty whose hair was longer than mine.

But I never did any of those things, and I am regretting it up to now. Instead, I gave them the most civil smile I could manage at that moment.

Still despite all the civility, the place seemed to be suddenly charged with a high voltage. My cousin, who was trying very hard to make herself invisible, was looking here and there, hoping to find someone who might able to help her in case the situation went out of hand.

When I bade them goodbye without creating a scene, I could hear their sighs of relief. Nobody—not even my cousin—noticed the clenched fists I was hiding behind my back. He did not seem to notice the all-too-bright smile plastered on my face, which was close to cracking from my effort. After giving him and his new family one last look, I rushed out of the bazaar, with my cousin close on my heels.

It was only when I reached the security of my lola's home that the dam of tears gave way. My cousin's broad back absorbed the hardest blows I could deliver, but she didn't move away or say anything. I wished was smashing my fists into his mistress' face instead.

For almost a week, I was reliving the memory. I wanted to pound my head against the wall as I failed to find any good answers to my questions. What went wrong? Why did he betray me. I was crying every time I heard Bob Carlisle's "Butterfly Kisses." Heaven knew, I would have given anything just to give him those butterfly kisses again.

He tried to explain his infidelity. After a week, I decided I had enough of him. I cut short my vacation and went back to Manila. Leaving our place was a way out of the scandal he had created which was causing our family so much grief.

Instead of sulking and licking my wounds, I accepted the job offer I had been putting off for some time. I badly needed to get away from him and erase my memories of him.

He didn't get in touch with me. He made no further attempts to explain why he hurt and split our family which I always wanted to be together.

Then I wrote him the longest letter I have ever written in my life. I told him things I could not say to his face or on the phone. Miles might separate us, but the ties that bind us cannot be easily forgotten. I set aside my pride and gave him the letter, which brought him to tears. I was still holding on to a tiny hope and hanging on to a promise he made when I was much younger: "*Anak*, whatever happens, I will never betray you. I will never betray or leave your mother." It was a broken promise.

I look again at his old and faded picture and put it in my dependable tin box where I hide the things that cause me pain. I am wishing that together with the picture, my love for my father can be hidden and forgotten. But I doubt it.

Snowhite, 22, is has a bachelor in library science degree from the University of the Philippines in Diliman.

THEY SAID

Flow of thought

"If a country, organization or individual keeps hearing or thinking about how ill they are, the group of individuals will begin to behave as if they are in fact ill. Where attention goes, energy flows."

—Author and life coach Jillian Sewers of the Corporation for Positive Change

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Good sense and value-laden ads

WE commend the three popular products—Coke, Jollibee and Greenwich—for pulling out their advertisements from two show-biz talk shows, namely "The Buzz" on ABS-CBN and "S-Files" on GMA. (PDI, 5/01/05)

Because of intense competition, it is apparent that nothing can stop these two television giants from airing obnoxious programs on prime time.

And it is here where it hurts most. The schoolchildren, in their formative years, are exposed to TV shows which are bereft of morality and respect for human dignity.

McCann Erickson, one of the country's top advertising agencies, has earned the people's respect for asking its clients to cancel their ad placements in the aforementioned "trash" TV shows. It was also McCann Erickson which made a study some eight years ago about children spending more time before the TV screen rather than studying their lessons and playing with their family members or friends, a social process that contributes to their well-being.

As we offer orchids to McCann Erickson, Coke, Jollibee and Greenwich, we are tempted to throw rotten tomatoes at Unilever's country communications manager for saying that his company would continue placing advertisements in such talk shows, as it is not the firm's job to watch their contents. How about its moral and social responsibility to the Filipino youth?

It's time that we punished irresponsible and indecent shows as well as the advertisers that keep them going, even as we reward programs and commercials that are respectable and value-laden.

In this regard, may we respectfully propose the giving of awards of recognition to advertisements—both in print and broadcast—which help promote positive Filipino values and virtues.

We further suggest that these awards be named Escriva Awards. Escriva means scribe. And it's the scribes or writers who come up with decent advertisements. Escriva is also an acronym for Education and Society's Council Recognizing Innovative and Value-laden Advertisements.

Furthermore, such awards can serve as a tribute to St. Josemaria Escriva who advocated sanctification of work. And certainly, producing value-laden advertisement is sanctified work.

—EUSEBIO S. SAN DIEGO,
president,
Quezon City Public School Teachers
Association, 22 Antonia St.,
Centerville, Tandang Sora,
Quezon City

Unappreciated

I AM a Government Service Insurance System pensioner in the City of Tabaco. When I received my check for April 2005 from the GSIS Legazpi City branch, posthaste I proceeded to the Philippine National Bank, also in Legazpi City where the pension fund was transferred from the Union Bank of Legazpi.

I was surprised when I was charged a service fee of P20. Many of the pensioners who had already encashed their checks grumbled for, indeed, why should we be charged the amount when other banks which were entrusted with the funds, like the Land Bank of the Philippines and Union Bank, did not charge the pensioners any service fee?

I inquired from the manager of the PNB who told me that the imposition of the service charge of P20 is the subject of a Memorandum of Agreement between the GSIS and the PNB. With the very meager monthly pension that I receive from the GSIS after serving the government for more than 40 years, the service fee of P20 really hurts. It is painful. The amount could buy us a couple or so of maintenance tablets.

In one case, the Supreme Court stated as follows: "Retirement laws should be interpreted liberally in favor of the retiree because their intention is to provide for his sustenance and hopefully even comfort, when he no longer has the stamina to continue earning his livelihood. After devoting the best years of his life to the public service, he deserves the appreciation of a grateful government."

—JUSTINIANO P. NAZ,
Retirement No.: 052-830-2058,
Tabaco City

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Writers of letters to the editor are requested to include their complete address and telephone or pager number or e-mail address for verification purposes. The Inquirer will not publish any letter unless such information is supplied.

A contradiction to a natural tendency

IN THE LAST four weeks, I became aware of four suicide cases: a banker; a mother, in her 40s, married to a distant relative of mine in Negros; a woman married to a bank executive, and a young woman working in a leading advertising agency.

Forty years ago, it would have been extremely rare to hear of a series of suicides committed within a short period. Is it a sign of harder times, or a lowering of moral standards, or simply a lack of religious formation?

The Catechism of the Catholic Church has the following to say about suicide:

"2280 Everyone is responsible for his life before God who has given it to him. It is God who remains the sovereign Master. We are obliged to accept life gratefully and preserve it for his honor and the salvation of souls. We are stewards, not owners, of the life God has entrusted to us. It is not ours to dispose of.

"2281 Suicide contradicts the natural tendency of the human being to preserve and to perpetuate his life. It is gravely contrary to the just love of self. It likewise offends the love of neighbor because it unjustly breaks the ties of solidarity with family, nation and other human societies to which we continue to have obligations. Suicide is contrary to the love of the living God.

"2282 If suicide is committed with the intention of setting an example, especially to the young, it also takes on the gravity of scandal. Voluntary cooperation in suicide is contrary to the moral law. Grave psychological disturbances, anguish, or grave fear of hardship, suffering or torture can diminish the responsibility of the one committing suicide.

"2283 We should not despair of the eternal salvation of persons who have taken their own lives. By ways known to him alone, God can provide the opportunity for salutary repentance. The Church prays for persons who have taken their own lives."

It is an act of charity to console persons who have lost a loved one due to suicide, and to pray for him. It is even a greater act of charity to advise persons with suicidal tendencies that suicide is a grave sin, and to strongly dissuade them, but with great affection and a sincere desire to help them.

—FRANCIS L. ARCENAS,
Dasmariñas Village, Makati City

The nation's real builders

WHEN we see those big SUVs cruising on Edsa, we can be pretty sure their owners have hefty paychecks. On the other hand, an ordinary bus zigzagging on Edsa is loaded with passengers whose salaries can hardly keep them alive from day to day. But they do the hardwork.

Every day we go to our air-conditioned offices, passing papers on a tray, clicking on the mouse, and surfing the Internet—what a happy life this is! But have you tried holding a hammer? A crowbar? Or a greasegun? How about a wrench? Or a jackhammer?

We seem not to notice that everything we take for granted is built by workers. In the Philippines, workers are underpaid, even harassed by employers. We sometimes see them taking on dangerous jobs, where they could even die for a measly P250 a day! Most likely, they are also saddled with debts.

Ask anyone of them if they are proud of their work; nine out of 10 would probably say no. The economy is bad, the government doesn't listen, what about now? Our workers are the ones who built everything for us. Isn't it time for us to do something for them? The success of the nation depends on our workers. Let everyone support them sincerely. After all, they built everything.

—RICCI SANTIAGO,
riccisantiago@gmail.com

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

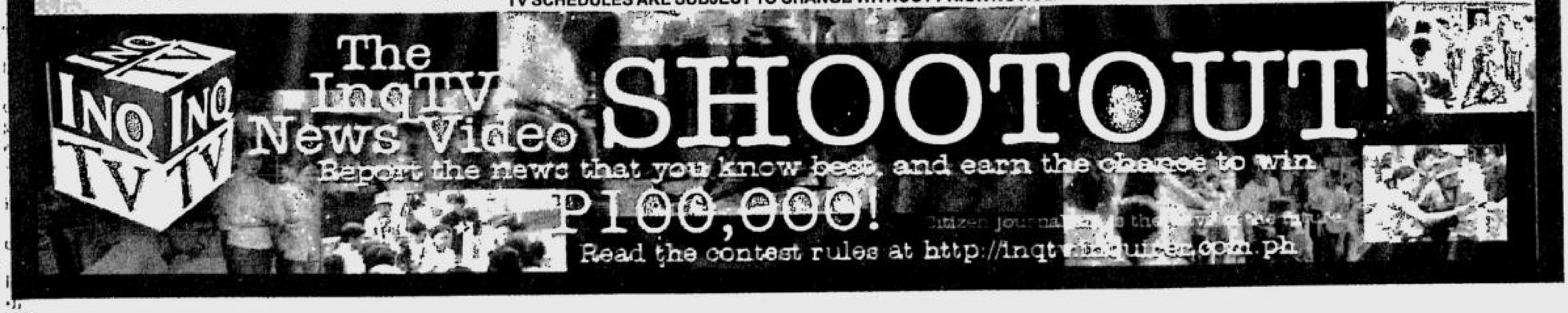
TV GUIDE

Thursday, May 12, 2005

WOWmalingMaLi!
9PM SABADO SABAGO!
ABC
ClickTheCity.com

Channel	2:30PM	3:00PM	3:30PM	4:00PM	4:30PM	5:00PM	5:30PM	6:00PM	6:30PM	7:00PM	7:30PM	8:00PM	8:30PM	9:00PM	9:30PM	10:00PM	10:30PM	11:00PM	11:30PM
ABS-CBN 2	Kapamilya Cinema				Showbiz No. 1 (4:25 PM)	Yu-Gi-Oh! (5:10 PM)	Naruto (5:35 PM)	Vidjoking	Qpids	TV Patrol World		Hiram	Spirits	Memories Of Bali	Stained Glass	Maalaala Mo Kaya			Insider
ABC 5			Problema Nyo, Sagot Ko	EZ Shop	PBA				Sentro	PBA					Big News	American Idol		Inq TV	
GMA 7		Saang Sulok Ng Langit	Now and Forever	Glass Shoes	One Piece	Knockout	Sorcerer Orphen	24 Oras		Extra Challenge		Darna	Encantadia (8:45 PM)	All About Eve (9:15 PM)		Magpakailanman			Saksi
RPN 9	Metro TV Shopping			Hey Arnold!	As Told By Ginger	Wild Thornberries	Sponge Bob	Score Tactics	The Ring	Infamous Murders	NBA On RPN					Newswatch Now	Video Hit Parade	Kasangga Mo Ang Langit	Police Hour
IBC 13		Lifestyle		EZ Shop		Home Shopping Network	IBC Express Balita	Pangarap Kong Jackpot		Home Shopping Network		Asian X-Tour			The Regional Billiards		IBC News Tonite		
JackTV		Just For Laughs	Ride With Funk Master Flex	Jack In The Box				Cinematch	Family Guy	Mad TV		Reno 911	Crank Yankers	South Park	The Daily Show With Jon Stewart	Hip-Hop Nation	Ride With Funk Master Flex	WWE Velocity	
Nickelodeon	Blues Clues	Rugrats	The Fairly Odd Parents	SpongeBob SquarePants	All That	Are You Afraid of the Dark?	100 Deeds of Eddie McDowd	The Amanda Show	The Adventures Jimmy Neutron	Fairly Odd Parents	SpongeBob SquarePants	As Told By Ginger	Yakkity Yak	Chalkzone	Rocket Power	Hey Arnold!	The Wild Thornberrys	The Angry Beavers	Rugrats
MYX		Urban MYX	MYX Backtrax	Pop MYX	OPM MYX	Take 5	My MYX	MYX Daily Top Ten		Mellow MYX	Rock MYX	Pop MYX	Urban MYX	MYX Presents		My MYX	MYX Backtrax	OPM MYX	Mellow MYX
ETC		Significant Others	Knock First	Blind Date	Fifth Wheel	Elimidate	Change of Heart	Seinfeld	Ambush Makeover	Good Morning Miami	Committed	American Dreams		Queer Eye For The Straight Girl		Entertainment Tonight	The Insider	The Tonight Show With Jay Leno	
Cinema One		Mistah				Bakit Di Totohanin				Eseng ng Tondo				Wooly Booly 2				Alas Dose	
Studio 23				PBL Game 2				Batman Beyond	Project Arms	Wazzup Wazzup	America's Next Top Model			The Bachelorette		News Central	Oprah		Yes Dear
AXN		Fear Factor (Season V)		CSI: NY (Season I)		Gensomaden Saiyuki	Gensomaden Saiyuki	Pensacola (Season III)		Alias (Season II)		30 Seconds To Fame	Mondo Magic	Lost		The Contender		David Blaine: Street Magic	
Star World		The Bold & The Beautiful		American Idol	Growing Up Gotti	Buffy The Vampire Slayer		The Simpsons	The Drew Carey Show	Star News Asia	Friends	American Idol	Growing Up Gotti	The Simple Life	Arrested Development	The Apprentice		Friends	American Idol
CNN				Business International		Larry King Live		World News	World Sport	Business International		World News Asia About Asia		World News	CNN Business Traveller	World News Asia		World News	World Sport
National Geographic		Frontlines Of Construction		Explorations Powered By Duracell		Evolution		The Snake Wranglers	Croc Chronicles With Dr. Brady Barr	Wow				National Geographic Specials		Frontlines Of Construction: Pipe Dream/ Moving The Monsters/Defying Gravity		Explorations Powered By Duracell	
Solar Sports				Kotv Magazine	Greatest Classics				Women's Volleyball '04				NBA TV Daily	NBA Playoffs Semi-finals Game2					Destination Finals
Lifestyle Network	Secret Gardens	The Fixl	Mission Organization	Carol Duvall	Molto Mario	Hot Off The Grill	Good Eats	Extreme Cuisine	Unwrapped	Tyler's Ultimate	E! News Weekend		Good Finds	Life & Style		Area		Road & Track	Back To Basics
HBO			That Old Feeling (3:35 PM)				Maria's Lovers (5:20 PM)			Multiplicity (7:05 PM)				Street Fighter - The Ultimate Battle			Darkness Falls (10:40PM)		
Star Movies				Intrepid			Rocketman (5:45 PM)				Lord Of The Flies (7:25 PM)			Assassination Tango				Commander: The Far Side Of The World (10:55PM)	
Cartoon Network	Scooby-Doo Show	The All New Popeye Show		Tom & Jerry Show	The Woody Woodpecker Show	Ed, Edd N Eddy	Mucha Lucha!	X-Men Evolution	Static Shock	Gundam Wing	Shaman King	Looney Tunes Show		The Powerpuff Girls	Dexter's Laboratory	Time Squad	Thundercats	He-Man & The Masters Of The Universe	Gundam Seed
ESPN		2004 Int'l. Volleyball Argentina vs. Australia			LPGA Golf Michelob Open				Singapore Cup '05 Finals						Sportscenter Asia	2004 WPBA Carolina Classic		Goals!	Sportscenter Asia
Disney Channel	Mr Bean: The Animated Series	Totally Spies	The Sleepover Club	Art Attack/Untalkative Bunny	Buzz Lightyear Star Command	Martin Mystery	Totally Spies	Kim Possible	Mr Bean: The Animated Series	House Of Mouse	Wonderful World Of Disney			My Wife And Kids	That's So Raven	America's Funniest Home Video	According To Jim	Wonderful World Of Disney	
Cinemax			Babylon 5: A Call To Arms			A Perfect World (5:15 PM)					A Reality Of Love			Octane			Purgatory		
Hallmark Channel	Who's The Boss	Strong Medicine		HCA: The Fairytaler	Sesame Street		Mad About You	Who's The Boss	Bewitched	Wire In The Blood		Strong Medicine		Boyfriend For Christmas			Sue Thomas: F.B.Eye		Wire In The Blood
Discovery Channel		Hour Asia		Hour China		Wild Discovery		Ultimate Discovery		Extreme Machines		Ultimates		Wild Science		Ultimate Discovery		Power Zone	
Sports Plus	Inside the PGA	Wachovia C'ship Day3						Raceworld		World's Greatest Auto Shows		World Poker Tour Episode 4 Costa Rica				Nascar Race Title (TBD) Darlington			
NBN		Taiwan/Winner TV Shopping		Value Vision	Teledyaryo	Value Vision	Next Stop			Network Forum		Teledyaryo		Sinulog Festival					

TV SCHEDULES ARE SUBJECT TO CHANGE WITHOUT PRIOR NOTICE.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INQBOX
Win this *Inquirer mug

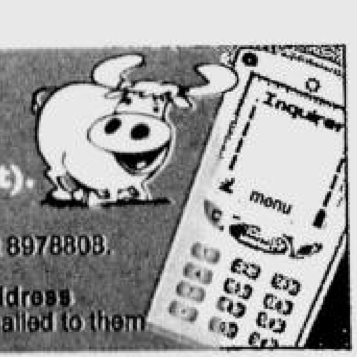
Question of the Week

Will legalizing jueteng solve the jueteng problem? What will?

Senders of d best 20 texts as publishd in Tuesday's **INQBOX** *wiL each receiv an *Inquirer Mug! Ü*

Key in: Inquirer box name/age/city/message.
Text your answers to 2207 (Globe) or 283 (Smart).
(Maximum of 160 characters)

*Metro Manila winners can call Jane at 8978808.
Provincial winners can text:
inquirer ad name/age/city/mailing address
to 2207 or 283 as their prizes will be mailed to them



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'Special operations' force Samar folk to flee

By Joey A. Gabieta
PDI Visayas Bureau

TACLOBAN CITY—Hundreds of residents in eight upland villages of Calbiga, Samar, have fled their homes following the "special operations" being conducted by armed men believed to be members of the military.

Calbiga municipal administrator Mario Cabujat said they were contemplating declaring the town under a state of calamity so the calamity funds would be released to help address the needs of the fleeing residents.

"The municipal government does not have enough funds to buy the things needed by these people. Now, if we'll place the municipality under a state of calamity, we can make use of our five percent calamity fund, which we can use to buy the things or items needed by these people," Cabujat, told the INQUIRER in a phone interview.

Cabujat said about 900 residents from eight upland villages fled their homes last Sunday to avoid the "special operations" being conducted by armed men whom they believed were military personnel.

These residents were from the upland barangays of Caamlongan, Lubang, Guinbanga, Binanggaran, Hindang, Hubasan, Pinangcalan and Tono.

They were temporarily living with their relatives at the town proper. But the Calbiga municipal government under Mayor Luzviminda Nacario planned to open some public schools in the town proper to accommodate those residents had nowhere to stay.

Cabujat said that based on the information they gathered from affected families, the special operation started for several days now.

"They told us that they are being harassed. They fear for their lives," he said.

But Capt. Cromwell Danganan, chief of Civil Military Operations of the 8th Infantry Division based in Catbalogan, also in Samar, denied that they were conducting special operations in the upland villages.

"The members of the Philippine Army strictly follow the guidelines set by Maj. Gen. Jovito Palparan (head of the 8th ID) to gain the trust and confidence of our people," he said.

"We cannot gain their trust and confidence if we will be involved in these acts as claimed by some people..." he added.

Danganan claimed that the armed groups described by the affected residents could be members of the New People's Army who were out to destroy the military's name and campaign to gain the confidence and trust of the people living in these communities.

"Your soldiers are trustworthy, helpful and respects the law on justice," he maintained, urging the people to return to their respective communities and resume their normal day-to-day activities.

Calbiga, 61 km from this city, is a fourth class municipality with an annual income of more than P28 million. It has more than 20,000 residents spread in 41 barangays.

It was in Calbiga where the military suffered a big setback in its anti-insurgency campaign in Eastern Visayas when six soldiers were killed in an ambush last April 9 in Barangay Caamlongan.

Diana Ragub, campaign and advocacy officer of the Samahan Han Mga Gugti Nga Parag-uma, a farmers' group in Eastern Visayas, asked the military to "immediately stop this campaign," referring to the alleged harassment initiated by the government troops.

"They are only giving these people reason to hate them and eventually join the (communist) movement... this is too much," she said.

Unpaid bills delay burial of Cantoneros

DIPOLOG CITY—Klein Cantoneros might not be buried as scheduled because the hospital where he was treated would not issue a death certificate unless the bill for his hospitalization was settled.

Arvin Cantoneros, younger brother of the slain broadcaster, told the INQUIRER the hospital bill amounted to about P87,000.

Arvin said it was their biggest financial worry at this point.

A death certificate is a requirement in securing a burial permit from the local civil registrar. Cantoneros' burial was set for Saturday.

"I therefore appeal for your kindness," Arvin said as he appealed for help.

Aside from the hospital bill, the funeral expenses for the slain broadcaster was expected to reach P40,000.

Arvin said the expenses for the wake were being tide over by contributions and savings from the family.

The Cantoneros family is a middle-class brood of 10 with the slain broadcaster as the third child. Their father is already aging.

Cantoneros' colleagues from dxAA-FM were also helping to raise funds.

Jett Opilac, dxAA-FM station manager, told the INQUIRER the funds they raised so far have barely reached 50 percent of the hospital bills.

"Efforts are also being worked out to ask for discount, especially on the professional fees of Cantoneros' attending physician," Opilac said.

Some media groups have also responded to the call channeled through text messages.

Iligan City-based journalist Lino dela Cruz said they will "see what we can do to help."

Although a broadcast journalist, Cantoneros was not an accredited member of the Kapisanan ng mga Brodkaster sa Pilipinas (KBP).

Only accredited members are entitled to a P100,000 personal accident insurance.

Those interested to offer assistance may coordinate with Jett Opilac, mobile phone no. 0919-7116084. *Ryan D. Rosauro, PDI Mindanao Bureau*

AFP team to study transfer of Southcom to Pagadian

ZAMBOANGA CITY—The military said it would form a survey board to study the feasibility of the transfer of the Southern Command headquarters here to Pagadian City.

During Monday's hearing of the House defense committee, Southcom chief Lt. Gen Alberto Braganza and Lt. Gen. Edilberto Adan, the military's deputy chief of staff, said the survey board would also determine where the money for the transfer would come.

On March 16, President Macapagal-Arroyo ordered the transfer of the Southcom headquarters.

"We heard of the transfer order from Southcom chief Braganza also on the same day when GMA gave the order during a meeting with military and civil officials during her visit to Zamboanga City last March 16," Adan said.

Both Adan and Braganza said they could not ascertain the exact cost of the transfer and its implications.

Parañaque Rep. Roilo Golez, the committee's chair, said the transfer order came as a surprise because no study was made.

"How can you implement the transfer when normally a study has to be made first before a decision is made by the President?" Golez said.

Zamboanga City Mayor Celso Lobregat, and Rep. Francis Escudero, Jacinto Paras, Rolex Suplico said the transfer order could affect the peace and security of the region and the cost it would entail could be better spent to more pressing matters in the military.

Lobregat said Ms Arroyo's order has caught the city's residents, including the military, by surprise.

Rev. Fr. William Kreutz, SJ, of the Movement for Better Zamboanga, said Ms Arroyo was ill-advised as it could pose a security problem to the entire region. Zamboanga City is the center of Western Mindanao.

"The best solution is for the maintenance of the status quo," Zamboanga del Norte Rep. Roseller Barinaga said.

The defense committee said it was giving the military one month to complete the study. But Adan said they might need more time before they could come up with the result. Rolly A. San Juan, PDI Mindanao Bureau

ROUNDUP

Hero's burial for cop

CITY OF CALAPAN—PO3 Norman F. Correa of the Roxas, Oriental Mindoro police was given a heroes' burial on May 7 with a 21-gun salute at the Don Rosario Memorial Garden in Barangay San Mariano, Roxas town. Correa was killed on April 28 while trying to save bus passengers from being held up. He was recently awarded the Medal of Kagitingan by the regional police office. Supt. Marcelino Romero, assistant provincial director for operations, told the INQUIRER that Correa was going home from Manila. "He was on civilian clothes but his instinct as a police officer, which was to save people, prevailed," said Romero. Correa, not knowing that other robbers where behind him, stood up, shot and killed two robbers in front who were taking jewelry and money from the passengers. He was shot from behind. The three other robbers fled the crime scene.
Madonna T. Virola, PDI Southern Luzon Bureau

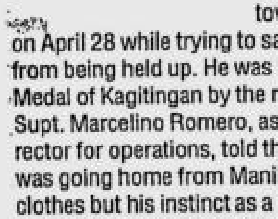
Anti-logging body hailed

CITY OF CALAPAN—The multi-sectoral Provincial Care Council will recommend to the Task Force Bantay Kalikasan its replication and expansion at the municipal level after it was found to be effective in its recent successful operation against an illegal lumber dealer. The move is hoped to speed up anti-logging operations in southern Mindoro. Fr. Jim Ruga, director of the Apostolic Vicariate of the Calapan-Service Commission, pledged to help replicate the task force in Bongabong town and other areas where illegal cutting is rampant.
Madonna T. Virola, PDI Southern Luzon Bureau

Kidnap suspect nabbed

CALAMBA, Laguna—Members of the Cavite Provincial Police Mobile Group arrested a suspected member of the dreaded Batangas-based kidnap-for-ransom Simbahan Group in Trece Martires over the weekend. Senior Supt. Benjardi Mantele, new Cavite police director, said suspect Christopher Simbahan, 31, of Barangay Ambulo, Tanauan City, was arrested in his safehouse in Barangay Hugo Perez on Sunday. Simbahan was the subject of a warrant of arrest for murder issued by slain Tanauan City Judge Voltaire Rosales.
Marlon Ramos, PDI Southern Luzon Bureau

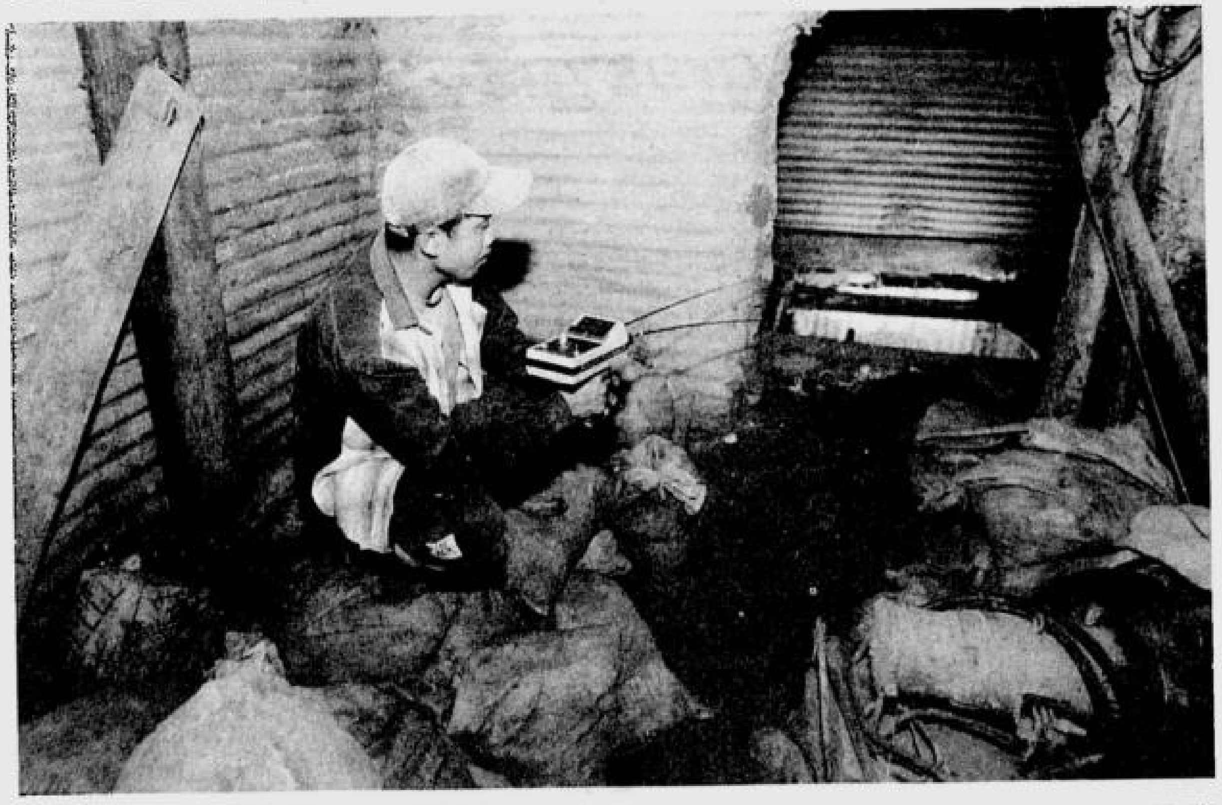
'Jueteng' persists in Mindoro


TULOY PA RIN!

CITY OF CALAPAN—"Jueteng" continues in Oriental Mindoro even as more than 150 arrests have been made, according to Supt. Marcelino Romero, assistant provincial police director for operations and group director of the 409th Provincial Mobile Group. "Our force is not enough," he said. "This has to be a concerted effort by the governor, police and citizenry," he added.
Madonna T. Virola, PDI Southern Luzon Bureau

Police denies 'jueteng' link

ROXAS CITY—A policeman, from Ivisan town Capiz, who is assigned in Angeles City, has denied a report linking him to "jueteng" operations in Central Luzon. SPO4 Hilario "Larry" Untayao said he and his fellow cops raided several gambling dens there. He was even among those charged with illegal detention by the persons whose gambling joints they raided. He said Lingayen-Dagupan Archbishop Oscar Cruz did not mention his name as a jueteng protector. Untayao maintained that his property were fruits of his legitimate businesses. Untayao's name figured in the police watch list of alleged jueteng operators as of 2003, which was reported in the INQUIRER on April 30.
Felipe Celino, PDI Visayas Bureau



TOUGH SEARCH REUTERS
A treasure hunter holds a gold scanning device near an excavation at a basement in a house in Baguio City in the hope of finding treasure supposedly left behind by Japanese soldiers during World War II.

Drilon backs mayor as official candidate of Liberals in race for governor of ARMM

DAVAO CITY—Senate President Franklin Drilon said the choice of businessman Ibrahim Paglas III as standard-bearer of the Liberal Party K-4 coalition in the Aug. 8 gubernatorial elections in the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao was based on a strong anticorruption platform of government.

In a statement, Drilon said on Monday that Paglas and his running mate Hata Dimaporo, are the answer to the need for development and progress in Mindanao.

"The Liberal Party is offering the people of the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao the option of electing political leaders who, for a change, can finally bring about effective governance, economic development and transparency to the regional autonomous government. This LP slate is standing on an anticorruption platform," Drilon, who is also LP president, said.

Drilon said the LP slate "will be composed of political leaders with impressive track records in governance and known personalities in civil society who have been advocating for peace, development and anticorruption programs."

"After decades of conflict, it's about time that Muslim Mindanao should have a political leader who is not only an inter-faith dialogue advocate but also a proven public manager who will bring economic development and foreign investments to the region." he said.

The 43-year-old Paglas successfully built a farming estate in formerly war-torn Datu Paglas, Maguindanao and nearby towns.

He is also a civil society personality in Central Mindanao being a leading official of peace and development-oriented nongovernmental organizations. Paglas was also a Ten Outstanding Young Men awardee.

The three-term mayor of Datu Paglas municipality is the grandson of the late Sen. Salipada Pendatun and a nephew of former Moro Islamic Liberation Front chair Hashim Salamat.

"Paglas is very development-oriented and advocates complete transparency in governance. Given the chance, I am confident he would be able to address the problems of poverty and the lack of effective governance in Muslim Mindanao," Drilon said.

The Senate President warned that unless an effective and graft-free government was delivered to Muslim Mindanao, extreme poverty would continue to make religious extremism and terrorism an attractive option among disgruntled people.

President Macapagal-Arroyo earlier decided not to endorse any candidate for the 5th ARMM elections.

The President earlier declared the coming elections a "free zone" and would recognize as official candidates anyone running under the banner of the K-4 coalition.

Regional Legislative Assembly Speaker Hatimil Hassan has withdrawn from the race. *PDI Mindanao Bureau*

Solon denies Abra's culture of violence

LA TRINIDAD, Benguet—There may be cases of politically motivated killings in Abra but this does not mean that a culture of violence prevails in the province, Abra Rep. Luis Bersamin Jr. said here on Wednesday.

Bersamin said the solution to Abra's peace and order problem lies with the courts trying the cases tied to politics and the amendment of the law allowing local officials to name their provincial or town police chiefs.

He said not even the existence of private armies of warring political groups and the incidents of election-related violence in the province would be enough to label Abra as a "killing field."

"It just so happened that those involved are public officials and political aspirants. And the killings are magnified since they usually happen during the election period," he said.

Bersamin, who was the guest during a three-day statesmanship convention among Cordillera officials at the Benguet State University here, said the government's decision to relieve Abra's 529-member police force was "merely a palliative move."

He said the key to restoring full peace in the province lies with the courts.

"Lasting peace will not come to Abra if the court cases are not resolved soon," he said.

He was referring to cases filed before the Abra Regional Trial Court involving provincial and local officials. He, however, refused to identify these officials.

Last month, Interior Secretary Angelo Reyes relieved Abra's police force following the findings of a task force that police officers and their men have become armies and supporters of local officials.

Army officials have also directed the relief of the 41st Infantry Battalion based in Lagangilang, Abra, although the order has yet to be implemented.

Bersamin said Reyes has formed a panel composed of representatives from the Department of Interior and Local Government, the Philippine National Police and the National Police Commission to evaluate the effect of the police pullout in Abra.

The panel is also tasked to mediate so that warring political groups in the province would arrive at mutually acceptable solutions to their differences.

Should the panel recommend the return of the relieved police command, Bersamin said "only the low-ranked policemen should be returned and not their officers." Delmar Cariño, PDI Northern Luzon Bureau

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

Farmers force way into DLR to demand land

BACOLOD CITY—More than 30 members of Task Force Mapalad (TFM) on Tuesday forcibly entered the Department of Land Reform (DLR) provincial office here to demand the installation of 102 farmer-beneficiaries in a disputed property in La Castellana town, Negros Occidental.

The entry happened between 9:30 a.m. and 10 a.m. when TFM members pushed the gate and forced their way into the office, prompting security guard Lucio Parra to fire a warning shot, said DLR information officer Serlito de los Santos.

He said the TFM members, led by Jerry Cahilig, did not heed to the warning shot. Instead, he added, one of them told the guard: "*Kanugon sang bala mo nga sa hangin mo gintiro, tani sa akon mo gintiru* (you wasted your bullet, you fired it in the air, you should have fired it at me)."

As the crisis progressed, some DLR provincial office personnel, out of fear, locked themselves inside their offices, he said.

The tension eased when the members of the Regional City Mobile Group and Bacolod police precinct 1 arrived.

Acting Provincial Agrarian Reform Officer Gideon Yongque Jr. then held a dialog with the TFM members to address their concerns.

During the dialog, the protesters asked that they be installed in a property previously owned by Roberto Cuenca in La Castellana town, as ordered by the Supreme Court.

"We asked for a copy of the ruling on the appeal of Cuenca but they could not provide us a copy," he said.

Rory Fajardo, TFM spokesperson, said they had been holding a picket outside the DLR provincial office for a week to demand the installation of 102 beneficiaries on the 144-hectare property. *Carla P. Gomez, PDI Visayas Bureau*

REPLICA REUTERS

Workers push a fake Golden Buddha held in a court in Baguio City. Thousands of treasure hunters devote themselves to finding the vast amounts of gold they say was left by retreating Japanese forces at the end of World War II.

Group of mayors assails destabilization attempts

A GROUP OF the country's city mayors yesterday decried the use of extra-constitutional means and batted instead for meaningful reforms through democratic processes amid continuing destabilization threats.

In a manifesto, the League of Cities of the Philippines (LOC), representing 116 cities nationwide, declared its unwavering support to President Macapagal-Arroyo and duly-constituted authorities in a bid to douse moves by antigovernment forces attempting again to create instability.

"Yes, we agree that there is need to institute reforms in this country. But as a civilized nation of 85 million people, those crying for meaningful changes must pursue the same through a peaceful, democratic way," said LOC president and Iloilo City Mayor Jerry Trenas in a statement.

Trenas said the people cannot afford to lose sight of upheavals around the world which should be examples of the destruction of extra-constitutional means of change.

Toxic chemicals linger in Bohol poison victims

By Tonette Orejas
PDI Central Luzon Desk

CITY OF SAN FERNANDO—The 104 children who survived food poisoning in Bohol in March still need medical help to completely rid their bodies of toxic chemicals, an official of the Provincial Board Members League of the Philippines (PBMLP) said.

The detoxification program for the survivors in Barangay San Jose in Mabini town has to be sustained for three months more, according to Antique Board Member Vincent Piccio III, the league's national president, citing the advice of government doctors.

Piccio said his group has been raising funds for the victims of the Bohol food poisoning.

"They're still weak and under medication," Piccio told Pampanga board members on the sidelight of his meeting with them here on Monday.

He said eight of the children, mostly 12 years old and below, were still in the hospital. The rest were recuperating at home.

Piccio considered them lucky for being able to live through the incident that killed 27 other children.

"The poison they took in was really strong. It was pesticide mixed with the cassava that was cooked [as snack]. In poor provinces where houses are small, [the flour and the cassava are] mixed with farm materials. By accident, the vendor got a material out of the poison, not knowing that the mixture used was poison," he said.

The survivors were being treated to a charcoal-based medicine that he described as expensive and unaffordable to poor families.

"They're not being neglected by the local government and other agencies but we knew that funds were not enough," Piccio said.

The league's Disaster Assessment, Management and Assistance through Bayanihan (Damayan) has initially raised P20,300 from the contributions of board members.

The amount, set aside for the purchase of the medicine, was distributed to the families of survivors on April 10, Piccio said.

Board members in Pampanga contributed P6,000 on Monday.

Piccio said he hoped more funds would coming to sustain the medication and eventually prepare the children for the school opening in June.

Those willing to contribute may contact the league through 0928-263-3445.

Raps against cassava vendor reach court

By Chito A. Fuentes
PDI Visayas Bureau

TAGBILARAN CITY—The Provincial Prosecutor's Office (PPO) has elevated to the court the criminal charge against a cassava vendor in connection with the food poisoning that claimed the lives of 27 schoolchildren in Mabini, Bohol, last March 9.

In a three-page resolution dated April 19, provincial prosecutor Toribio Quiwag said there was probable cause to charge vendor Ana Luyong with reckless imprudence resulting in multiple homicide.

The resolution said Luyong's act constituted reckless imprudence because of her "inexcusable lack of precaution" in cooking the cassava *maruya*, which was mixed with or contained coumaphous as found by the National Bureau of Investigation forensic chemist.

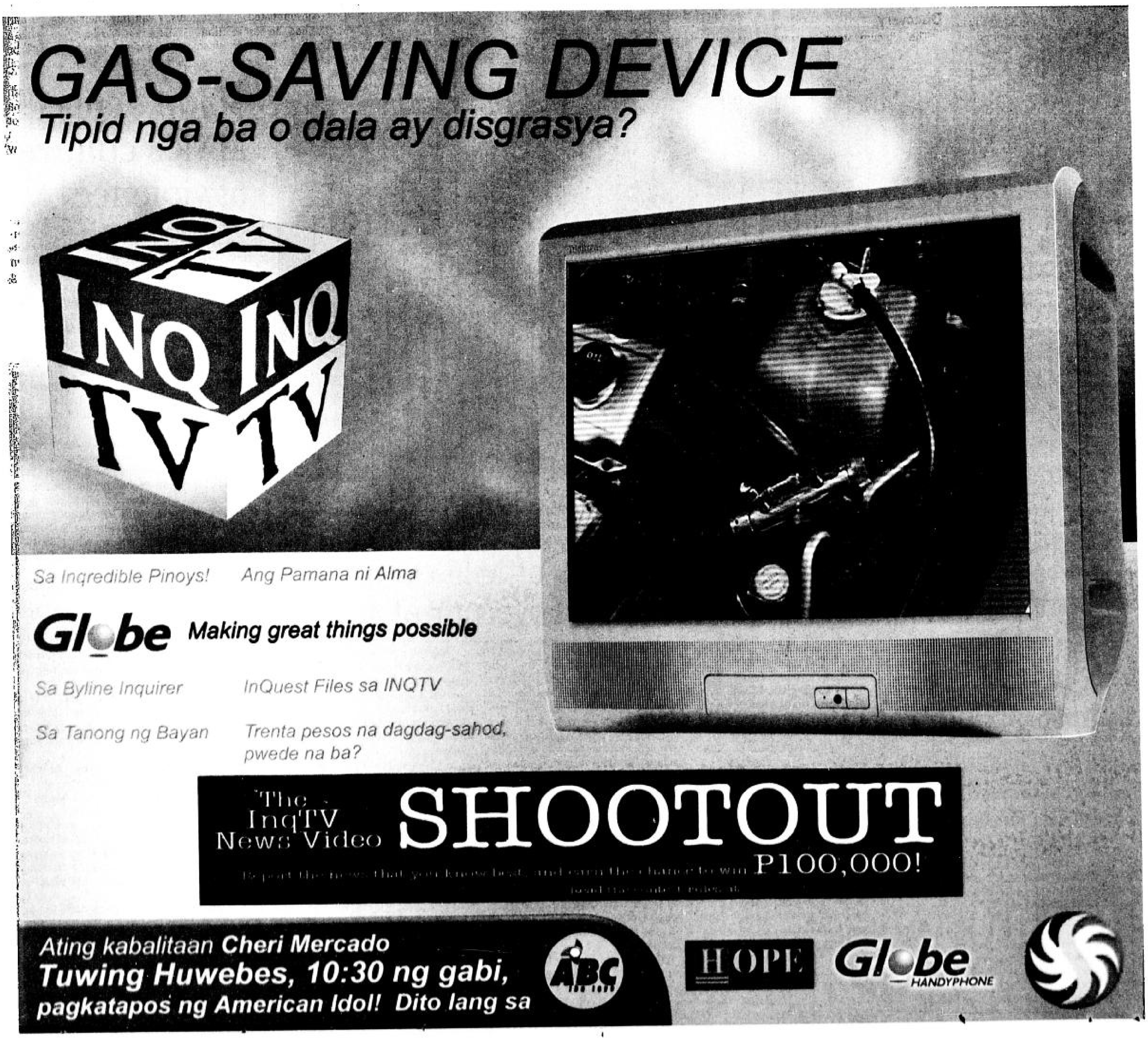
Last March 9, Luyong sold a cassava dish locally known as *maruya* (fritters) at San Jose Elementary School in Mabini town, about 104 km from Tagbilaran.

Many pupils bought the fritters and shared these with their classmates and friends. After several minutes, the pupils, who ate the *maruya*, started to complain of stomachache, vomiting, nausea, excessive sweating and blurry sight.

Alarmed about the situation, teachers and parents immediately brought the children to hospitals. Some 27 later died while many others were confined.

In her defense, Luyong, 68, denied that she was negligent in cooking the *maruya* and said there were other vendors who sold food at the public school.

In an investigation conducted by the NBI on March 11, the team recovered insecticide labeled "123" and a frying pan used in cooking the *maruya*, which contained unknown white residue.



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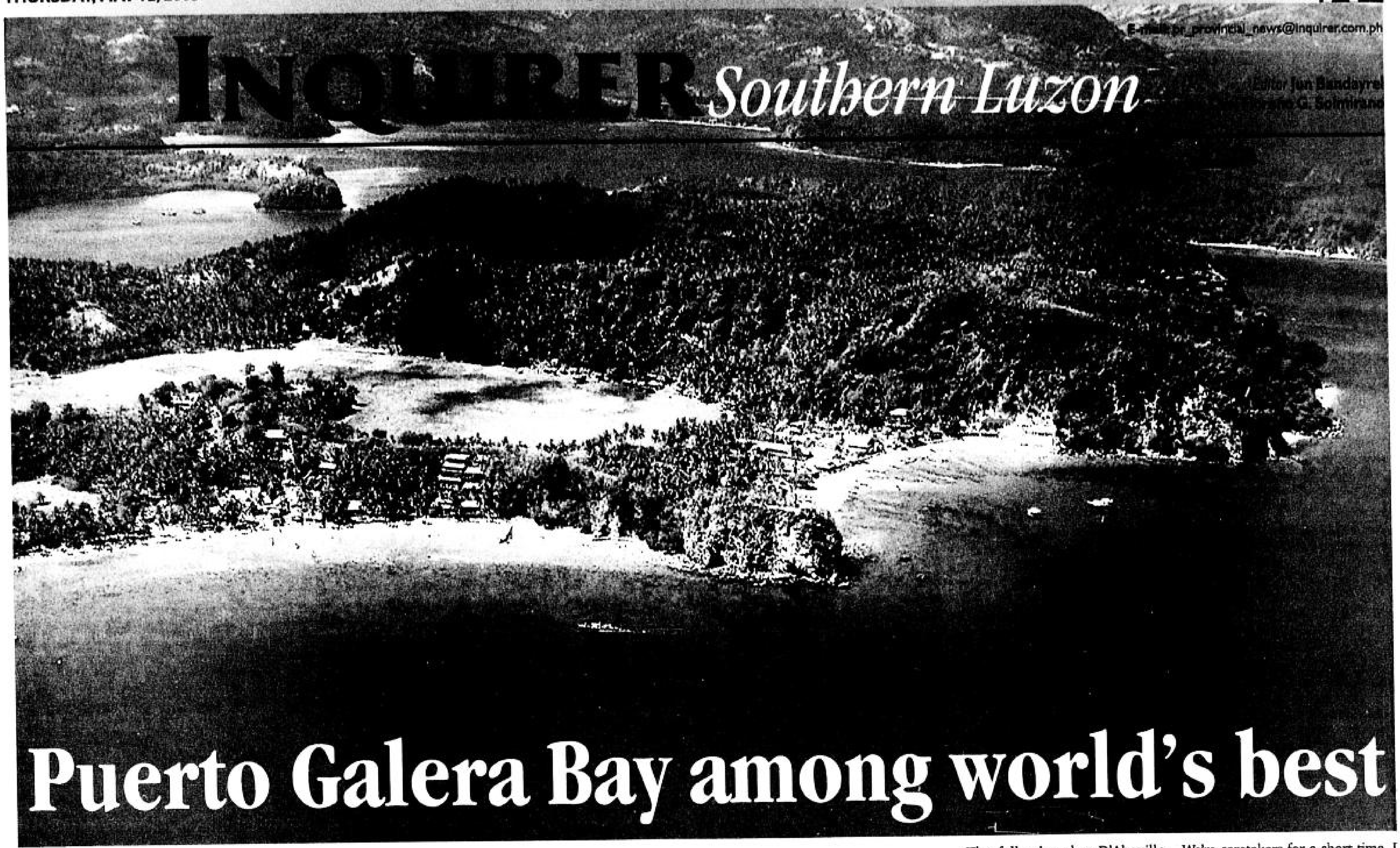


Puerto Galera Bay among world's best

By Madonna T. Virola
Puerto Galera, Oriental Mindoro

THE PUERTO Galera Bay in northern Oriental Mindoro is now a member of the prestigious Club of Most Beautiful Bays in the World.

Supported by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (Unesco), the club is an international non-government organization based in Vannes, France which aims to promote, protect and develop marine and bay sources.

It was founded in Berlin in March 1997, upon the initiative by the tourism office of the Vannes region in the Gulf of Morbihan in France.

Puerto Galera is the 32nd bay in the world to be recognized as among the world's most beautiful and the third in Asia after the Halong and Nha Trang Bays in Vietnam. It is the first in the Philippines.

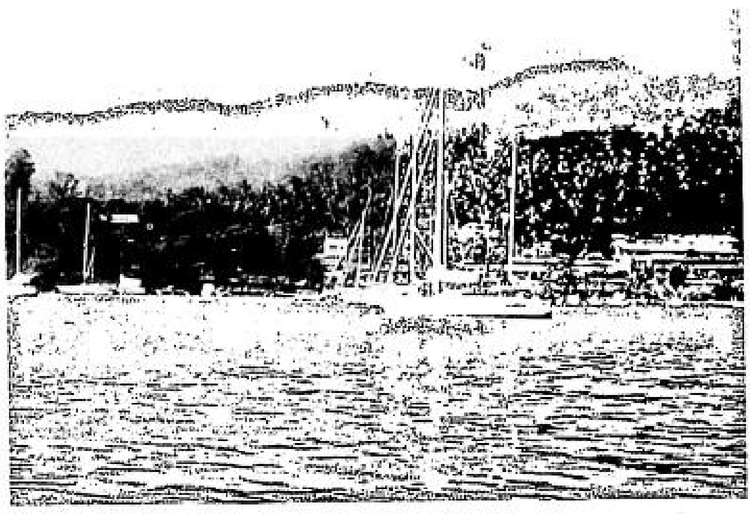
The accreditation was based on four concerns: protection, enhancement, promotion and local people's commitment to the project.

Puerto Galera's winning features were captured by Frenchman Hubert d'Aboville, 50, in an audio-visual documentary he presented before 80 club members in Agadir, Morocco, in November last year.

On May 7, D'Aboville turned over the diploma of club membership to the municipal government, through Vice Mayor Juan Ascan, at his house in Villa Malasimbo during the launching of the Puerto Galera Bay Association, the club's local chapter. Over a hundred guests came, the Frenchman said.

The Puerto Galera Bay's club membership was recognized on March 30 in Nha Trang. The club has been helping it gain worldwide publicity.

D'Aboville showed to his guests the slide presentation that won the membership diploma for the bay.



THE BEAUTY of Puerto Galera is captured in photos presented to the Club of Most Beautiful Bays in the World. HUBERT D'ABOVILLE

Discovery

The documentary narrated that Puerto Galera was discovered by Spanish explorers Martin de Goiti and Juan de Salcedo on their way to Manila in 1570. Since the 10th century, it has been known to seafarers as a trading port and strategic harbor along the vital shipping routes to and from the near East, Indian coast, Indochinese coast, China, various points within the Philippine archipelago, and the kingdoms of Sumatra and Java.

According to residents, the town of Puerto Galera used to be a lonely place as nobody wanted to inherit the beach area from their parents, until it was discovered in the 1960s by European backpackers.

D'Aboville said the University of the Philippines established a marine biological station in the town in the mid-1930s.

The post has identified 121 fish species (from the reefs); from the families of *Pomacantridae*, 140 species; *Pomacanthidaw*, five species; and *Chaetodontidae*, 15 species; nine out of 16 seagrass species in the whole world; 19 of the 40 mangrove species in the Philippines (dominant are the *Rhizopora apiculata, Avicennia officinalis* and the *Avicenia marina*); 152 out of 400 coral species in the country; and the rare hard corals, *Anacropora puertogalerae*.

In the '70s, Puerto Galera became a "Man and Biosphere Reserve," an environmental program of the Unesco, owing to its diverse and unique marine and terrestrial flora and fauna.

In 2000, the Department of Tourism declared it the ninth tourist destination in the Philippines.

D'Aboville, a forester, married Araceli Valenzuela, a Filipina and granddaughter of revolutionary hero Pio Valenzuela, in 1982. Araceli was then engaged in tourism work in Manila.

Later, D'Aboville commissioned a man to look all over the country for a place to a stay. After a month, the man could not find a place to his liking, he said.

On their 10th wedding anniversary, the Frenchman was worried about his gift to his wife. "My kids saved me on the evening of Dec. 30, 1992 at the Coco Beach. They were holding beautiful shells from the shore of Puerto Galera."

The following day, D'Aboville went to Tony Taylor, owner of the Ponderosa golf course in Puerto Galera, and was shown a 2,000-square-meter property. "It was just the size of my lot in Manila, I wanted more space to stay outside," he said.

One day, as he traversed Mount Malasimbo, he climbed a tamarind tree and saw a scenic view of Puerto Galera. "And that's it," he said.

A certain Angelina Cataquis showed him a land title covering an area of 10 hectares and one square meter, which, incidentally, was the number of years D'Aboville had been married (10 years and one day). Right out, the land purchase was consummated.

"We have had the best relationship with the Cataquises since then," said D'Aboville.

Now a resident of Puerto Galera for 25 years, D'Aboville has been bringing many of his countrymen to Puerto Galera. He rents a house in Manila, where he manages a power and telecommunications company. He is involved in a rural electrification project in Masbate, which is financed by the French government.

Personal advocacy

D'Aboville's commitment is more than personal. "Boracay is degraded after 20 years. Excess of something will kill a place. Development is very tricky, you have to think and plan. We don't want this to happen to Puerto Galera," he said.

"This world is so small, fragile. We're caretakers for a short time. I also care for myself and to live longer, we have to protect while enjoying the environment. It's our responsibility to keep it. I'm terrified at the continuing cutting of trees in the country. People seem to not be scared of the effects," he said.

He remains steadfast in his advocacy for Puerto Galera, following up what the municipal government has done on reported cases of illegal logging.

A hectare of coffee plantation was started by his farm manager, Maning Morillo, a graduate of the University of the Philippines.

"We will plant seedlings to be given away to the people around us. I can buy their produce and sell them to Nestlé. It can be like a cooperative," he said. "They'll be happy and this will even stop soil erosion," he said.

D'Aboville has been talking with key people. "Whether the diploma will remain on the mayor's table or the recognition will remain as such is to be seen. And I don't know whether they've understood me."

"People here are so familiar with Puerto Galera that they take it for granted. We're not much concerned with money but with conservation [of resources and beauty], job [generation], then attracting tourism. Purity of air, freedom and others are what the paying tourists are after," said D'Aboville.

Because of D'Aboville's contributions, Councilor Daniel Enriquez has proposed to make the Frenchman an "adopted son" of the town.

He collects the world through stamps

By Jed Ll. Bacason
Legazpi City

"I COLLECT the whole world and I'm halfway through it," Swiss philatelist Walter Goetz says.

Twenty years into stamp collecting and he has already amassed half of the world's postage stamps.

"I have millions of postage stamps here, but I can't possibly give the exact count because I already stopped counting a long time ago," he said.

Goetz's collection, arranged chronologically in albums of different countries, nearly covers the entire shelves in the walls of his study room that he dedicates solely to his hobby.

Each stamp is painstakingly wrapped in plastic, hinged and labeled with details, such as date of issue, title, description, perforation and denomination—on the pages of more than 400 stamp books that he himself made.

His collection, which includes first-day covers and postcards, virtually spans the whole world, from the United States and Britain to the little-known Pitcairn Islands and the small states, Liechtenstein, Monaco and Vatican City.

"Stamps from these small, unknown countries are actually the valuable ones because their governments make stamps only in quantities for their tiny populations, so, it's not easy to acquire one," he explained.

He also takes pride of his three complete sets of Philippine stamps, from the first issued during the Spanish era up to those issued in 2000.

He said he especially liked the Philippine stamps because of the rich history they chronicle.

Childhood pastime

Goetz, who has been residing in Legazpi City for more than 12 years, started collecting postage stamps since his elementary years in Chol, Switzerland.

"During my childhood years, the world was not so much 'electronic' and our toys were not hitech gadgets compared to nowadays. Our pastime then was to remove the stamps from our parents' letters, collect them and bring them to school to trade with classmates," he recalled.

But Goetz did not consider going full-time into stamp collecting. He took up electronic engineering in college in Zurich and sought a regular job after graduation.

He practiced his profession in Zurich for five years. His expertise brought him to countries, such as Libya and Lebanon, where he helped build power plants for Asea Brown Boveri Ltd., one of the largest electrical engineering companies in the world.

Seeking warmer climes, he came to the Philippines in the 1980s and engaged in several businesses. He managed a hotel in Manila, a resort in Pagsanjan, Laguna, and a small factory in Cabuyao, Laguna.

"Managing those businesses was a 24-hour job. I got maybe three or four-hour sleep everyday," he recounted.

Having his feel of white-collar jobs and wanting a more peaceful, pollution-free place, he moved to Legazpi and started an apartment rental business with his Bicolana wife.

"The apartment business is a very quiet business, unlike the ones I handled before. It also gave me time to go back to my passion," he said.

Full-time

Now a full-time stamp collector, Goetz, who is turning 50 this year, spends most of his time in his study room, arranging his collection and preparing letters to fellow stamp collectors all over the world for stamp trades and auctions.

"Sometimes, I would wake up at 4 a.m. and I could not sleep, so I go to my study room. I usually spend eight to 10 hours there. It has become my work," he says.

During summers, he even hires helpers to assist him mount the stamps in books and send letters to other collectors around the world.

According to him, stamp collecting is a very meticulous hobby, if not taxing, but the fulfillment one derives from it far outweighs the effort.

He says it's not only that he gets to see stamps from other countries, he gains many friends as well.

Despite the countless hours Goetz spends on his collection, he does not derive any income from it.

"I am not after the money so I never sell my stamps. I exchange them with my friends abroad. That is how I increase my collection," he claims.

Goetz boasts of over a hundred collector-friends from all the continents who exchange stamps with him constantly.

A single exchange might involve hundreds or thousands of stamps, according to him. But he also accepts exchanges involving five to 10 stamps.

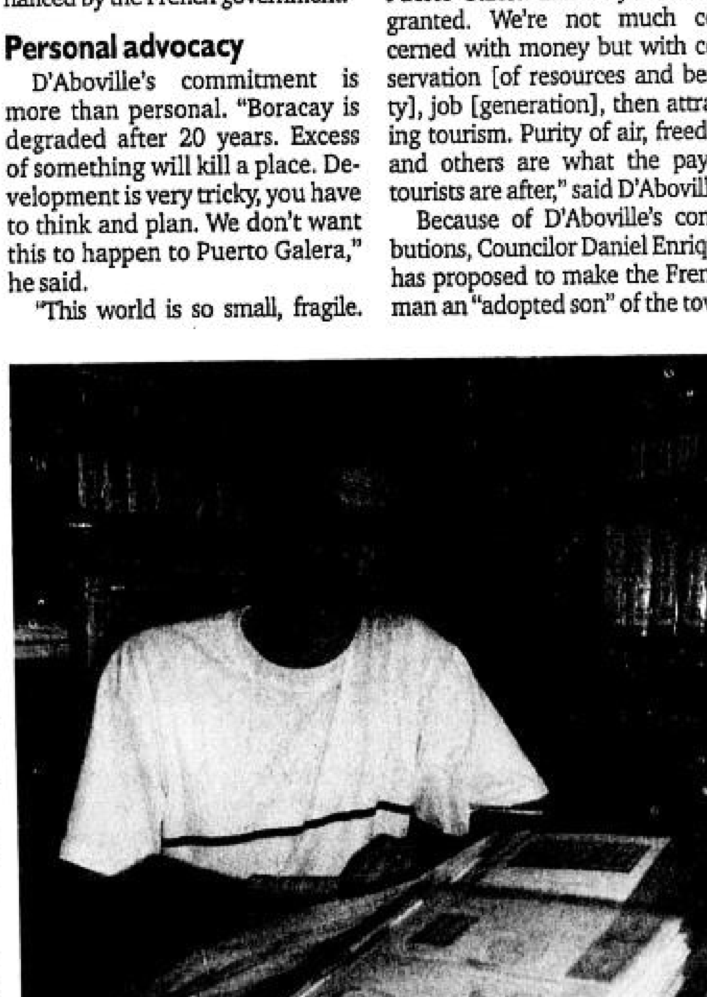
He says he receives around 20 to 30 mails everyday from other traders around the world. "You don't need a lot of money in stamp collecting, what you need are friends," he says.

But Goetz admits to spending money in stamp auctions. According to him, he spends P10,000-P20,000 in auctions in Manila and abroad monthly.

"I don't mind spending money for my collection. Money can be earned back, but the opportunity to acquire a certain rare stamp to be added to your collection might never come again," he explains.

More than gold

"More than collecting stamps of different values, I am collecting pieces of the history of a country. That is worth more than the money," he adds.



SWISS philatelist Walter Goetz with his stamp collection. JED BACASON

According to him, a stamp is a commemorative of all the important events and persons of a country.

On the commercial aspect, a stamp is worth more than gold, Goetz says.

"Gold's value increases or decreases over time, depending on the gold market. But the value of a stamp does not decrease, it always goes higher over time," he adds.

With the advent of electronic communication, like e-mail and text messaging, and the utilization of automatic stamps, he notes that the use of postage stamps could be over very soon.

"The value of postage stamps issued today could rise up drastically when postage stamps become obsolete a few years from now," Goetz said. "If young people would start collecting today, they would definitely end up with a major collection by then."

Get the killers of newsmen, GMA orders Reyes

By Christine O. Avendaño

FINALLY, the government is taking a more firm hand in solving the unabated killings of media people.

President Macapagal-Arroyo yesterday instructed Interior Secretary Angelo Reyes to solve the series of murders of journalists the way he solved kidnapping for ransom.

"I want it to be a very tight plan, the way Secretary Reyes was able to do the tight plan to solve the kidnapping problem," the President told reporters.

The President's statement comes in the wake of the killing of Philip Agustin, publisher-editor of Starline Times Recorder, in Dingalan, Aurora.

The President said she had authorized Reyes to "convene with the private sector a consultative meeting among stakeholders."

"So we could all work together on how to solve and prevent the killings of media people," she said. "Let's all get together."

The President said she and Speaker Jose de Venecia were putting up a fund for additional reward for information on the killings.

She said she would donate P3 million while De Venecia would give P2 million.

"As warranted by the consultative meeting, we will see what kind of resources the CIDG (Criminal Investigation and Detection Group of the Philippine National Police) or whatever partners in solving the cases of journalists will be needed. We will provide resources available," she said.

In the Senate, Majority Leader Francis Pangilinan yesterday called on the committee on justice and human rights to start an investigation of the spate of killings of journalists.

The Senate committee on justice and human rights is chaired by Sen. Joker Arroyo.

For his part, Sen. Ramon Revilla urged PNP chief Director General Arturo Lomibao to hunt down and prosecute the killers of journalists, or "resign."

"This is very, very disturbing. The PNP's inability to prosecute and punish perpetrators emboldens more those who are behind these crimes," said Revilla, chair of the committee on public information and mass media.

"If we do not act on this immediately, then this country is not fit to be called a democratic nation," he said. *With a report from Norman Bordadora*

Publisher shot dead; 6th RP journalist killed in 5 months

From page A1

when he heard three gunshots.

"I rushed back and found Apê bloodied. He was unable to talk. I took him to the [municipal] hospital where he died minutes later," Lapuz said in a phone interview.

Cruz said one of the bullets hit Agustin behind his left ear.

Dingalan police investigator Raul Mesona said one of the two unidentified assailants, who fled on a motorcycle, shot Agustin from a window. Officials in the regional police office in Camp Olivas, Pampanga, said the assailants used .45 cal. pistols.

Threats since last week

Nenita Mendoza, Agustin's sister, said the "direct threats" to her elder brother's life started coming last week.

"I told him to be careful because a week before this happened, two men in black leather jackets and who were wearing shorts were surveying my house and Apê's daughter's house," Mendoza said.

"I advised him not to return to Dingalan, not even during his birthday on May 1," she added.

Mendoza said her brother left town two weeks ago when he got word that Mayor Jaime Ylarde, a retired policeman, had been angry at the reports published in Starline Times Recorder.

Lapuz said he came to see Agustin to also tell him to be careful. He said Agustin had informed him of his arrival through a text message.

Truth suppressed

"Hindi na nila pinalampas (They did not let the chance pass)," Mendoza said, referring to her brother's plan to distribute Starline Times Recorder's special edition on Wednesday.

It carried stories on alleged missing calamity funds, relief goods and logs, the construction of a cockpit that used the aluminum roof of the town's slaughterhouse and the slow resettlement program for more than 1,000 families displaced by the landslides in November and December 2004.

Lapuz said the May 2-8 edition's two banner stories carried the headlines: "Dingalan, Aurora: Napakabagal ng rehabilitation (Rehabilitation, slow in Dingalan, Aurora)" and "Mamamayan sa timog, sumigaw na (Southern residents have spoken)."

Starline Times Recorder, which has been operating for five years now, maintains offices in Isabela and Dingalan. It has a weekly circulation of between 300 and 1,000 and is distributed in Cagayan Valley and Central Luzon provinces.

Mendoza said the first 50 copies of the special edition were released late last week.

Residents lapped up the 500 copies on Wednesday, she said.

Lapuz said the killing of Agustin indicated the "extreme suppression of the freedom of expression."

Mayor denies hand in slay

Ylarde, reached by phone in Dingalan, said he had asked the police to conduct an investigation of the killing.

He said he had "nothing to do with it" and wanted his "name cleared of any doubt."

But Ylarde found fault with Agustin, saying the publisher had "strongly criticized" him and attributed to him many alleged irregularities.

Before Agustin was attacked, Ylarde said he planned to sue Agustin and his "accomplices" for libel. He said Agustin's "accomplices" were his political enemies whom he would sue for libel after he gathered sufficient evidence against them.

Ylarde said Agustin had been charged with several estafa cases. He claimed that Agustin took money from some 200 Dingalan residents to whom he sold land owned by the Buencamino family, one of the biggest landowners in the town.

It was because of these cases that Agustin left town several years ago, according to the mayor. *"Maraming problema yan dito* (He has many problems here)," Ylarde said.

Birthday

Lapuz, however, described Agustin as a "good man." Mendoza called her brother a "brave person."

Lapuz said Agustin, out of desperation because of the slow progress and alleged corruption in Dingalan, ran for mayor but lost in 1998.

Mendoza said the killers and the brains behind her elder brother's killing should be brought to justice.

"Katarungan, yan po ang tanging hanap namin (We only want justice)," she said.

In Isabela, Luisa Agustin-Yniego, another sister of Agustin's, said she last saw her brother when he celebrated his birthday in Cauayan City on May 1.

"The killer should be jailed to pay for his crime," Yniego said.

PNP spokesperson Senior Supt. Leopoldo Bataoil said PNP Director General Arturo Lomibao and regional police officials were en route to Dingalan to look into the killing and assure Agustin's family of police action. *With reports from Villamor Visaya Jr., PDI Northern Luzon Bureau*

Advice for threatened newsmen …

From page A1

(KBP) said yesterday.

Raul Antupuesto, provincial chair of the KBP in Davao Oriental, said journalists should widen their options because they could no longer trust the government to protect them.

"If you are critical of the military and the police, and yet you want to ask security assistance from them, you are like a fool. The security escorts they will provide will be the ones to kill you," he said.

He said the NPA would not turn down the request of journalists for security.

"The same with those journalists critical of the NPA, they should seek assistance from their friends in the military and police," said Antupuesto, also station manager of Radyo Natin.

Tougher libel laws

But two members of the House of Representatives said tougher libel laws and a "professionalized" media could stop the spate of killings of journalists.

Camarines Sur Rep. Felix Alfelor Jr. said the murders could be due to Filipinos being sensitive to criticisms.

He said the killings also showed that the country's libel laws were not effective.

"We are soft-skinned compared with other countries. Can you not attribute our press freedom as the very cause of [killings] of those committing [libel]. People may consider broadcasters' statements as libelous and perhaps, because of their humiliation before the community, they are forced to do it?" Alfelor said.

Alfelor said he was "definitely for press freedom" but he added that this should not be abused.

"I think it is also important that we take the side of those who are being hit, especially the government officials… because I know for example that a lot of commentaries are imbued with malice," he said.

'Envelopmental' journalism

"Most of these commentators are being funded. You cannot find a commentator who is not being funded by somebody," Alfelor said.

He said the political enemies of the officials being criticized usually fund the tirades.

Lanao del Norte Rep. Roseller Barinaga, who delivered on Monday a privilege speech condemning the murder of his friend and broadcaster Klein Cantoneros in Dipolog City, agreed that there was a need to review the country's libel laws.

Interpellating Barinaga, Basilan Rep. Gerry Salapuddin said "unprofessionalism" in media might have contributed to the country being called the most dangerous place on the planet for journalists.

"Does the gentleman not think that there must be something wrong in the way our media [people] practice their profession? Sometimes you can hear of "envelopmental journalism." That when they are paid a price… they are willing to hit anybody or write anything against any person or any political opponent?" Salapuddin said.

Barinaga suggested that a law be passed so that media associations "will have teeth" to monitor members.

He said journalists could be required to meet certain "qualifications" like having acquired a number of journalism units.

"And then, there must be a regular conduct of seminars, not only on the freedom to write, but also on the freedom not to write," said Barinaga, a former journalist.

Cavite Rep. Gilbert Remulla, a former TV reporter, agreed that media needed "some sense of professionalization," warning that the public has responded with apathy to the killings.

"There isn't really much of a howl. Only the journalists are protesting, but the public can't be seen that it is really shocked by these killings. I am rather shocked by this situation," he said.

In Davao Oriental, former KBP provincial chair Romeo Bote Jr. said the only way journalists could prevent the attacks was to be responsible at all times.

"You only hit because you have to hit people in government who are not doing their jobs," said Bote, station manager of Madayaw FM.

Frank Gupit of Manila Broadcasting Corp. said security aides would not assure one's safety.

"You will still die even if you have security escorts. I don't believe in guns. It won't protect you. Being a responsible media man is the best protection for us," he said.

Dennis Lazo of Bombo Radyo said "it's better to be alone."

Threats to broadcaster

"We know already that working in the media is a dangerous profession. By choosing this career, you have already offered your life to the public," Lazo said.

In Don Carlos, Bukidnon, broadcaster Arthur "Jun" Sapanghari, a correspondent of dxDB Radio Bandilyo of the Catholic Media Network, said he had seen suspicious-looking men outside his home since Sunday.

The men, who were riding motorcycles, have also been asking about his whereabouts.

Sapanghari said he saw one of the men and was alarmed because "he was wearing a helmet when it was almost dusk."

"He also kept on texting. I called for police assistance but he had already left when they arrived," he said.

Sapanghari said before the sightings, unidentified men had threatened to kill him if he would continue with his work.

"They told my wife 'let him stop [broadcasting] or he would be silenced,'" Sapanghari said.

Attempts to life

"Bandilyo Jun covers the Southern portion of Bukidnon where controversial issues abound. We have reminded him to be careful following the attempt on his life last year," Fr. Rey Raluto, station manager of dxDB, said.

Father Raluto said Sapanghari narrowly escaped an attempt to kill him.

Two motorcycle-riding men fired shots at him while he was walking in Maramag town.

Raluto said there were also attempts to bribe Sapanghari but the broadcaster turned down the offers. *Reports from Ferdinand O. Zuasola, Grace Cantal-Albasin and Philip C. Tubeza*

IN THE KNOW

Well-planned power grab

PAST 1 a.m. on July 27, 2003, 321 young soldiers wearing red armbands arrived at the Ayala Center in Makati and planted claymore mines in the area.

Calling themselves Magdalo, they occupied the Oakwood Premier Ayala Center and threatened to set off the explosives should government troops attack.

Their spokesperson, Navy Lt. SG Antonio Trillanes IV, demanded the resignation of President Macapagal-Arroyo, then Defense Secretary Angelo Reyes, then Philippine National Police Director General Hermogenes Ebdane, and then Armed Forces Intelligence chief Victor Corpus.

The soldiers occupied Oakwood for at least 20 hours. They agreed to return to barracks after several hours of tense negotiations.

At around 10 p.m., a beaming Ms Arroyo announced that the mutiny had been put down. But she also said the Magdalo would be investigated and punished according to the law, and its civilian supporters charged.

On July 29, Ms Arroyo said she had formed a commission composed of retired Supreme Court Justices Florentino Feliciano and Minerva Gonzaga-Reyes and political science professor Carolina Hernandez to look into the roots of the mutiny.

On July 30, the peso closed weaker for the fourth consecutive session. It opened at 54.77 against the dollar but finished at a new four-month low of 54.70, down from 54.67 the previous day.

On Aug. 1, the Department of Justice charged the 321 soldiers with coup d'etat before the Makati Regional Trial Court. Among those charged were the leaders—Trillanes IV and Navy Lt. James Layug, Marine Capt. Garry Alejano, and Army Captains Gerardo Gambala and Milo Maestrecampo.

The respondents included 33 officers and 91 enlisted men from the Army, 12 officers from the Air Force, 31 officers and 55 enlisted men from the Navy, and 22 officers and 77 enlisted men from the Marines. No bail was recommended.

The soldiers were also subjected to court martial for violating five Articles of War: Article 63 (insubordination and disrespect for the President); 64 (disrespect for superior officers); 67 (mutiny); 96 (conduct unbecoming an officer and gentleman, particularly relating to a serious offense of coup d'etat); and 97 (the general provision for other crimes).

In a speech on Aug. 6 at the opening of the Asean finance ministers' meeting in Makati, Ms Arroyo ruled out "unwarranted leniency" for the soldiers, saying military adventurism had to be stamped out.

But on Aug. 25, she ordered the release of 30 officers and men, saying they were misled or coerced into joining the mutiny or were merely implicated and had not taken part at all.

Also that month, Finance Secretary Jose Isidro Camacho reported to the Cabinet that while the mutiny had weakened the peso, battered the stock market and raised the cost of foreign and local borrowings, it did not affect growth targets.

"What we really lost is momentum because before the coup [attempt], we had very good things going for us," he said. "The deficit was under control, domestic interest rates were down, inflation was benign, and growth appeared to be improving."

On Oct. 16, the Feliciano Commission concluded that the mutiny was a "well-planned" power grab and not a spontaneous protest by disgruntled soldiers.

It said the mutiny was rooted in corruption and the politicization of the military, and warned that the AFP "could implode and collapse with unpredictable consequences" if these issues were not addressed.

On Sept. 24, 2004, at Camp Aguinaldo, Trillanes, Gambala, Maestrecampo, Alejano, Layug and Marine Capt. Nicanor Faeldon saluted Ms Arroyo and expressed contrition for their actions. *Michael Cucio, PDI Research*

184 Oakwood soldiers ordered released

From page A1

Gen. Efren Abu) will be made by this court for the immediate release of all accused from detention."

Shouts of joy broke out among the soldiers.

The 96 junior military officers who led the coup attempt, and who are being tried separately, are also likely to enter into a plea bargain, according to the defense panel.

"I think that is a possibility," said lawyer Ruel Pulido. "The fact that the plea bargain of the enlisted personnel succeeded gives us a chance to go for plea bargaining in the case of the officers."

Both the military prosecutors and the defense lawyers expressed satisfaction with the plea bargain and the verdict.

'Justice, reconciliation'

In Malacañang, President Macapagal-Arroyo hailed the decision of the military tribunal.

"I think it's a very good example of justice and reconciliation," Ms Arroyo told reporters at a news conference.

She pointed out that those who were sentenced were merely the "followers," and that their leaders were "still facing the full brunt of the civilian and military courts."

Ms Arroyo also noted that the soldiers had been detained for almost two years.

"I think [they have] served their sentence and they're being reinstated, but with demotion. So that's part of justice with reconciliation," she said.

The President had earlier vowed that the one-day uprising mounted at the upscale building of serviced apartments by the rogue troops and their backers would "be met with the full force of the law."

The maximum penalty for mutiny is death during war time and life imprisonment during peace time.

'Grave imposition'

Under the plea bargain, the 184 enlisted men pleaded guilty to violation of Article of War 63 (disrespect toward the President, Vice President, Congress, or secretary of national defense), Article 64 (disrespect toward superior officer) and Article 97 (conduct prejudicial to good order and military discipline).

Some enlisted personnel who came to observe the hearing yesterday said the accused got off "lightly" because they could have been discharged outright.

But chief prosecutor Col. Julius Magno said: "I would say [the verdict is] a very grave imposition. A three-rank demotion, forfeiture of pay—it really affects the soldiers."

He added: "The military justice system has prevailed."

According to Magno, talks for a plea bargain began a year ago.

"Now both parties [have acknowledged] that indeed there must be discipline, that the justice system must be upheld," he said.

Prosecutor Col. Pedro Davila said the outcome was "a manifestation of the strict implementation of the military justice in the country."

"Definitely, this is a triumph for the government," he added.

'Fair judgment'

Pulido, who, along with fellow lawyer Theodore Te, had been relentless in defending the soldiers since the start of the trial, said he was "happy" the plea bargain succeeded.

"The judgment was fair," he said. "I think the court acted in accordance with the law."

He said his clients hoped that the President would be lenient and further reduce the sentence.

Pulido also said the junior officers knew about the plea bargain.

He said the junior officers had told him to "do what is best for the interest of the enlisted personnel."

Pulido said the trial could have eventually resulted in an acquittal, but that the soldiers would have been detained for years for the duration.

Twelve enlisted men did not join the plea bargain because they have a pending motion for reinvestigation, prosecutors said.

The trial started in January 2004, but it has yet to move beyond arraignment.

Each of the soldiers had to be arraigned individually on each of the four charges. All have refused to enter a plea.

For the junior officers who are being tried separately, the arraignment has not even started.

The arraignment was stopped last month after two officers issued a "peremptory challenge" against the then court president, Brig. Gen. Ferdinand Bocobo, who was subsequently replaced by Recuenco.

'Dangerous period'

The delay in the trial of the soldiers and their plea bargain reinforced notions that plotters are rarely punished severely in the Philippines, largely to ensure the support of the restive military for the Arroyo administration.

"It's part of the attempts by Malacañang to ward off any extra-constitutional threats," Ramon Casiple, executive director of the Institute for Political and Electoral Reform, told Reuters.

"I don't think it is dangerous yet, but we are entering a dangerous period," he said. *With reports from Christine O. Avendaño, Reuters*

Army/Air Force/Marines	Navy
Private	Seaman 2nd
Private 1st Class	Seaman 1st
Corporal	Petty Officer 3rd Class
Sergeant	Petty Officer 2nd Class
Staff Sergeant	Petty Officer 1st Class
Technical Sergeant	Chief Petty Officer
Master Sergeant	

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New drug mix fatal to users – PNP

By Luige A. del Puerto

A DRUG syndicate is trying to create a more powerful drug by mixing ketamine, a sedative used in animals, and metamphetamine hydrochloride, popularly known as shabu.

But the combination could be deadly to users, Deputy Director General Ricardo de Leon warned the public yesterday.

"The drug has a very dangerous effect, and is definitely more harmful to the brain," De Leon said, quoting reports from the police chemical laboratory unit.

De Leon issued the warning after narcotics agents discovered 97 grams of mixed ketamine and shabu in a clandestine laboratory on Apo Street in Quezon City on Tuesday.

Agents also found 6.8 kilograms of ketamine worth around P34 million, several grams of shabu, and ephedrine, a chemical used in the manufacture of shabu inside the house. Police arrested J.R. Avellanosa, caretaker of the house, during the raid.

"The operators are experimenting with shabu and ketamine. They may be trying to create a new drug. This is the first time we've seen this kind of mix," De Leon said.

The chief of the Central Police District-Crime Laboratory said that ketamine is a hallucinogen while shabu is a stimulant.

"You are awake, and appear to be on cloud 9, but actually, you could be like a walking robot," Sr. Insp. Filipinas Francisco-Papa described the sensation of a person who has taken the combined drugs.

Francisco-Papa added that the user may no longer know what is happening around him. That is worse than taking shabu or ketamine alone, she added.

Because of this, the Philippine Drug Enforcement Agency and the police's Anti-Illegal Drugs Special Task Force consider ketamine, and the new combination (ketamine and shabu) as "date-rape drugs."

A gram of ketamine costs around $90 dollars, and is now considered a dangerous drug.

De Leon said they have found out why the big-time drug syndicate, allegedly ran by Johnson Chua, has been manufacturing ketamine. "It turned out that they are experimenting with a ketamine-shabu combination," De Leon said.

Chua had been linked to the Quezon City laboratory and another one raided in Cagayan de Oro last Monday.

He reportedly heads a syndicate that operated a huge shabu laboratory in Davao City that had been raided by authorities last New Year's eve.

De Leon added that the Quezon City laboratory had produced 10 kilos of ketamine. The cargo had already been sent abroad.

Yesterday, police presented to the media Melchor Martinez, alias "Mr. Wong" and "Tata," a Chinese national and Chua's alleged right hand man.

Agents had seized a kilo of shabu worth P1.2 million from Martinez in a buy-bust operation last week.

Using information supplied by Martinez, agents swooped down on a Cagayan de Oro warehouse last Monday. The raid yielded 10 plastic drums of chemicals believed to be shabu.

The discoveries were an indication that drug lords could be shifting their operations to Mindanao and the Visayas, according to PDEA Director General Anselmo Avenido Jr.

Marikina walks thru history

By Edson C. Tandoc Jr.

WALK down memory lane in Marikina City.

In celebration of National Heritage Month, the city government will hold a walking tour this afternoon to acquaint people with the history of Marikina.

The tour will drop by heritage sites in the city like the Kapitan Moy, a century-old building where shoemaking in the city began in 1887.

Though already airconditioned, the building's walls and balusters are original.

It has served as a house, a school, a clinic and now a museum. The ground floor hosts a restaurant.

1.5-km tour

The 1.5-kilometer tour will start at 4 p.m. in front of the Freedom Park near the City Hall.

Along the way, native delicacies will be served to tourists for free, the city public information office said.

There will be servings of *waknatoy* (a version of the popular menudo), "everlasting" (steamed ground pork) and other native food.

Tourism Secretary Ace Durano is expected to attend the tour along with officials from the National Commission for Culture and the Arts and the Filipino Heritage Foundation.

Double life for 12 kilos of shabu

By Nancy C. Carvajal

THE CALOOCAN City Regional Trial Court has sent a 36-year-old man to two life terms in jail for possession of 12 kilos of shabu.

Judge Victorino Alvaro of Branch 120 also ordered Joseph Jay Manigue to pay a fine of P1 million for violating the Dangerous Drugs Act.

Manigue, of 278 Toronto Street, Vista Verde North, Kaybiga, Caloocan City, was arrested in a January 2001 buy-bust operation.

Prior to his arrest, police put Manigue under surveillance after he was heard bragging that he was keeping several kilos of high-grade shabu and that he was looking for a buyer.

After his arrest for possessing two kilos of shabu Manigue then surrendered 10 more kilos of the illegal drug, which he had buried several meters from his mother' s house at Tokyo Street of the same village.

LONG, HOT SUMMER. Residents of a Manila suburb line up for water after a busted valve reduced the water supply in most Metro Manila areas.

HAROLD ORARA/CONTRIBUTOR

BIR seeing stars; more visits to follow

By Leila B. Salaverria

THE BUREAU of Internal Revenue has been seeing stars, literally, after it had filed a string of tax evasion cases against high profile entertainment personalities, including Richard Gomez and Regine Velasquez.

Actors had been visiting the BIR offices to put their tax documents in order, according to BIR Deputy Commissioner Licerio Evangelista.

"According to one of our district directors, actors have now been going to our offices to collate their documents. Maybe they didn't know that they needed to do that," he said at a National Press Club forum yesterday.

Licerio said the bureau is banking on the "fear factor" that the filing of cases could get people to pay their taxes. According to him, the BIR focuses on the high-profile cases because it does not have the warm bodies to attend to all the cases if they go after every single taxpayer who has been remiss in his duties.

"Our objective is to file two to three cases, and our reward is compliance. There will be a 'fear factor,' and the impact is tremendous," he said.

The BIR is also set to see more stars in the future. Licerio said BIR commissioner Guillermo Parayno had sent a representative to talk with an actors' organization headed by television host German Moreno for a meeting between the two groups

Licerio said the BIR was not zeroing in on entertainment figures. Gomez' alleged non-filing of taxes was detected by a computer, he said. Non-filers were easy to detect because the computer would only need to check blank spaces in the system. There were blanks for two years in Gomez's case, Glicerio added.

4 jeepney groups vow not to strike for 5 years

By Clarissa S. Batino

NO TRANSPORT strikes for as long as President Macapagal-Arroyo is in power.

This was the promise of four jeepney groups to Transport Secretary Leandro Mendoza yesterday during the oath-taking of the officers of a newly-established cooperative called the Philippine Jeepney Operators and Drivers Alliance Foundation.

The moratorium on strikes was signed by the Federation of Drivers and Jeepney Operators of the Philippines (Fejodap), the Philippine Confederation of Drivers Organization-Alliance of Concerned Transportation Operators (Pcdo-Acto), the Makati Jeepney Operators and Drivers Association (Mjoda), and the Alliance of Transport Operators and Drivers Association of the Philippines (Altodap). The militant Pinagkaisang Samahan ng Tsuper at Opereytor Nationwide (Piston) did not join the move.

In exchange, the jeepney groups sought reforms related to the traffic system, third-party insurance, and processing efficiency of the Land Transportation Franchising and Regulatory Board (LTFRB).

At the same time, the LFTRB assured the public that the P2 hike in jeep and metro bus fares would be the last for the year.

Fund lack blamed for trash woes

By Fran Katigbak, Edson C. Tandoc Jr. and Nancy C. Carvajal

THREE besieged mayors blamed fund lack and politics for the filing of charges accusing them of failing to enforce garbage segregation laws in their localities.

Parañaque City Mayor Florencio Bernabe said the city had no budget for waste segregation.

While also citing fund lack, Malabon City Mayor Canuto Oreta said undisciplined residents were making the implementation of the law harder.

For his part, San Juan Mayor JV Ejercito called the charges filed by the Philippine Bar Association (PBA) as "political harassment."

The PBA on Tuesday sued Bernabe, Ejercito and Oreta for allegedly violating Republic Act 9003 or the Ecological Solid Waste Management Act of 2000.

"We have substantially complied with RA 9003 through the city's solid waste management board," said Bernabe.

But he said the city did not have the money for an information and educational campaign to bring the practice of waste segregation to residents.

"We need to disseminate information but the city has no budget for that yet," Bernabe told the INQUIRER.

Ejercito yesterday admitted that garbage collected in his town remained unsegregated but cried foul over the filing of charges against him.

Yesterday, the San Juan public information office declared in a press statement that San Juan is the "cleanest town in Metro Manila."

But while there is "total clean up" in San Juan, Ejercito admitted that only 30 percent of the town's garbage was being segregated.

"We are slowly implementing waste segregation," Ejercito said.

Malabon public information officer Allan Encarnacion said the local government was trying to do its job despite the lack of funds and the non-cooperation of city residents.

Worse, budget constraints had affected funds for garbage collection which had been cut by fifty percent, according to Encarnacion. He said they were trying to cope with the situation.

Environmental destruction at gold rush site

ON TARGET

Ramon Tulfo

THE GOVERNMENT should adopt measures to protect the environment at the newest gold rush site in Mindanao.

The Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) seems blind and deaf to the imminent destruction of the forest and creeks at Sitio Kalinawan, Barangay Taocanga, Manay, Davao Oriental.

Trees are being felled at the mountain barangay to make trusses for tunnels and building houses of miners.

The creeks that flow into the Manay river downstream are now being polluted with mercury.

Mercury is used to process ore into gold.

What's happening in Sitio Kalinawan happened at Mt. Diwalwal in the Compostela Valley more than 20 years ago during the early gold rush.

Mt. Diwalwal's ecosystem has been destroyed by the gold mining activities.

Davao Oriental officials seem indifferent to the possible destruction of the environment caused by gold panning and mining because some of them got a piece of the action.

At least two of them are taking part in the gold rush: Gov. Maria Elena Palma Gil, through her son, Jopet and Primo Lumando, president of the Association of Barangay Captains in the province; and Board Member Dodo Miones, the governor's closest ally.

The general perception in the province is that the governor doesn't care about the environment since she was also linked to the illegal logging activities on the mountain of Cateel town.

The governor is empowered under the law to oversee gold rush activities in her area.

She has formed Task Force Kalinawan for this purpose.

But alas and alack, *sinarili ni Gov ang minahan!* The governor had excluded Manay Mayor Manolo Dayanghirang from the task force because the mayor happens to belong to a rival political party.

The mayor is supposed to have control over peace and order and environmental concerns in his town.

* * *

Lawyers, no matter who their clients are, are just doing their job in a litigation process.

They should not be blamed for taking up the cudgels for their clients.

Vicente Chuidian, a close friend, complains that he's been threatened with physical harm by the respondent in a civil case titled Petron Corp. vs. Herma Shipping and Transport Corp.

Chuidian says Herminio Esguerra, owner of Herma Shipping, is "holding me personally responsible for the consequences" resulting from the lawsuit.

The case involves the alleged pilferage by Herma Shipping and Transport employees of oil cargo owned by Petron.

Herma used to carry Petron products in its cargo ships.

Chuidian says he's not scared. He just wants to expose the threat just in case something happens to him.

* * *

There are insinuations that Zamboanga del Norte Gov. Rolando Yebes might have had a hand in the murder of radio broadcaster Klein Cantoneros.

Yebes is not capable of murder. That is, if I know him well.

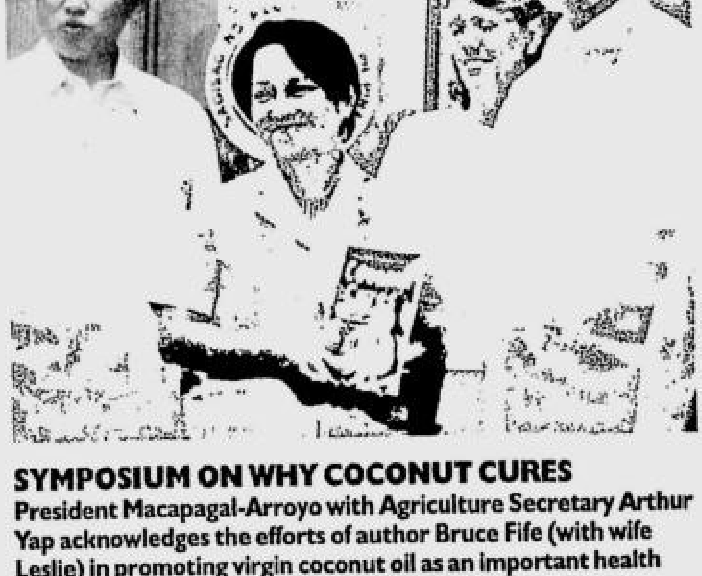
Many years ago, when he was still with the Bureau of Customs, he was the subject of tirades in this column.

Yebes' reaction was to talk to me and give his side. He never showed any hint of aggression when he talked with me.

Who knows, some other guys could have ordered Cantoneros killed so the blame would be placed on Yebes who would be a natural suspect.

The governor was the subject of Cantoneros' tirades in his radio program.

But Yebes was not the only one whom the firebrand Cantoneros criticized.

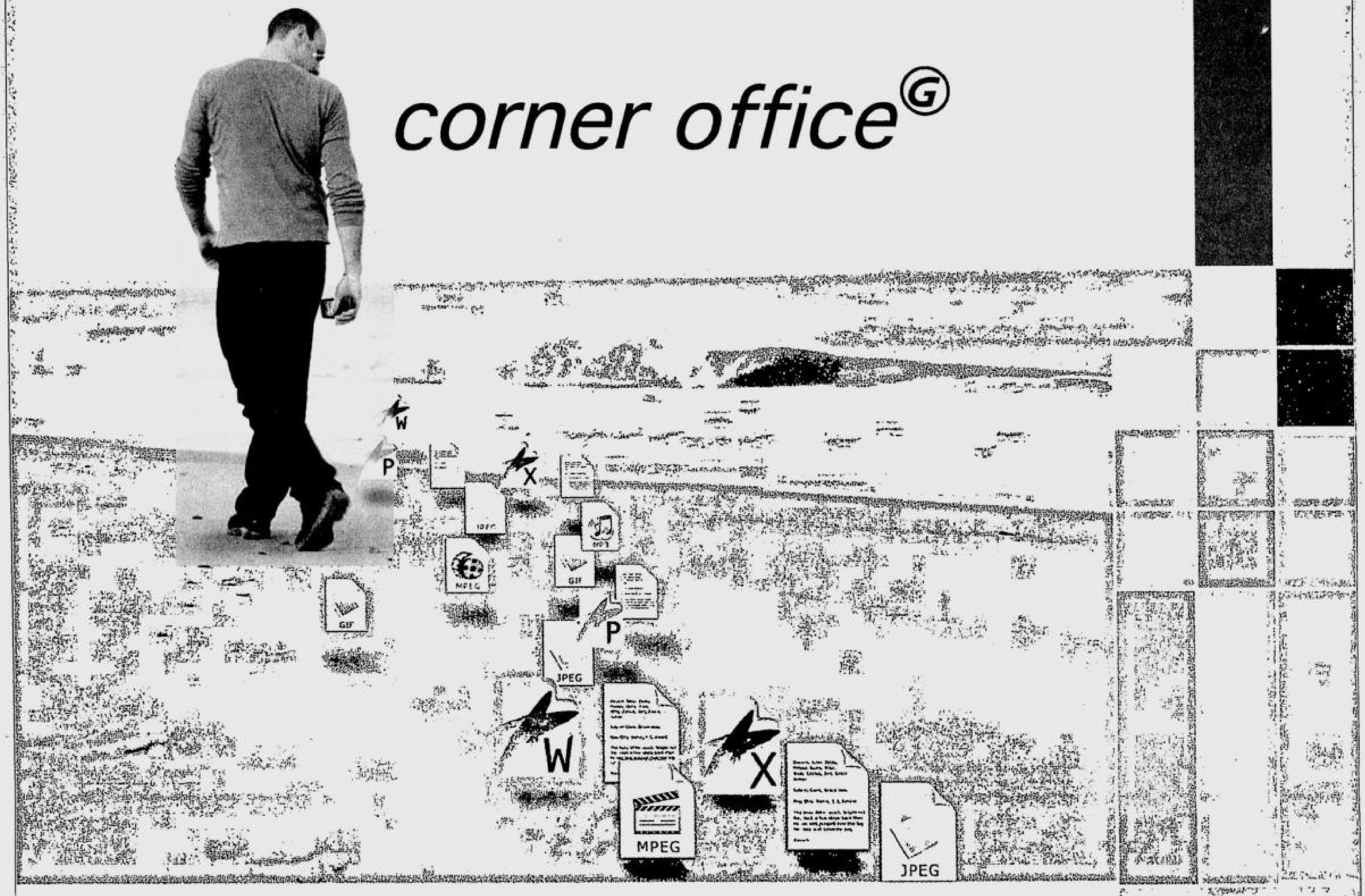


EDWIN BACASMAS

SYMPOSIUM ON WHY COCONUT CURES

President Macapagal-Arroyo with Agriculture Secretary Arthur Yap acknowledges the efforts of author Bruce Fife (with wife Leslie) in promoting virgin coconut oil as an important health food in soybean oil-dominated America.

Naturopath and nutritionist Dr. Fife will head a Saturday, May 14 symposium on "Why Coconut Cures" with cardiologist Conrado Dayrit, dermatologist Vermen Verallo-Rowell, and chemist Fabian Dayrit at Traders Hotel on Roxas Blvd. Teresa Santos of VCO Philippines invites health advocates and medical practitioners to the rare gathering with PhP 1,500 tickets inclusive of snacks and lunch available at telephone nos. 727-3948/727-3768.



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SPORTS TV

TENNIS: ATP Hamburg Masters; 1 p.m. and 10 p.m.; STAR Sports - Catch the second round and the final 16 in this tune-up for the French Open.

BASKETBALL: NBA Playoffs - Pistons vs Pacers, Game 2; 8 a.m.; Solar Sports; Mavs vs Suns, Game 2; 10:30 a.m.; RPN 9 - The NBA Conference Semifinals continue with these pair of Game 2 encounters.

Compiled by L. Mangulat

SPORTS

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Editor Teddyvic S. Melendres

Aces whip Red Bull

GAMES TODAY (Quezon Convention Center)
4 p.m.—Coke vs Sta. Lucia
6:35 p.m.—Barangay Ginebra vs SMB

By June Navarro

MIKE Cortez posted double-double figures last night to offset the absence of Brandon Cablay as Alaska prevailed over Red Bull Barako, 96-87, in the 2005 Gran Matador PBA Fiesta Conference at the Araneta Coliseum.

Cortez shot 17 points and issued a conference-high 13 assists in 39 minutes—figures the former De La Salle standout didn't usually come up with when Cablay was around.

"The story of the day was not about the game. It was about Brandon (Cablay)," said Alaska coach Tim Cone after the Aces notched their ninth victory after 14 games.

That, plus Purefoods' 88-85 victory over Talk 'N Text in the second game, gave the Aces a share of the lead with the Phone Pals.

The Hotdogs climbed to a tie with Sta. Lucia at 7-7.

Cablay, two of eight foreign-bred Alaska players who ended their temporary suspensions after complying with the documentary requirements of the league, got injured ironically on the day he and his Fil-Am teammates were reinstated by the PBA.

The 6-foot Cablay fractured a bone in his left hand in the RP Team B-Supremo Cane Vinegar's losing game against the Sydney Kings Tuesday.

"It was bad luck that he got hurt. But if we think that it has something to do for the greater good like playing for the country, we'll not be disappointed anymore," said Cone of Cablay, who will sit it out for at least three weeks.

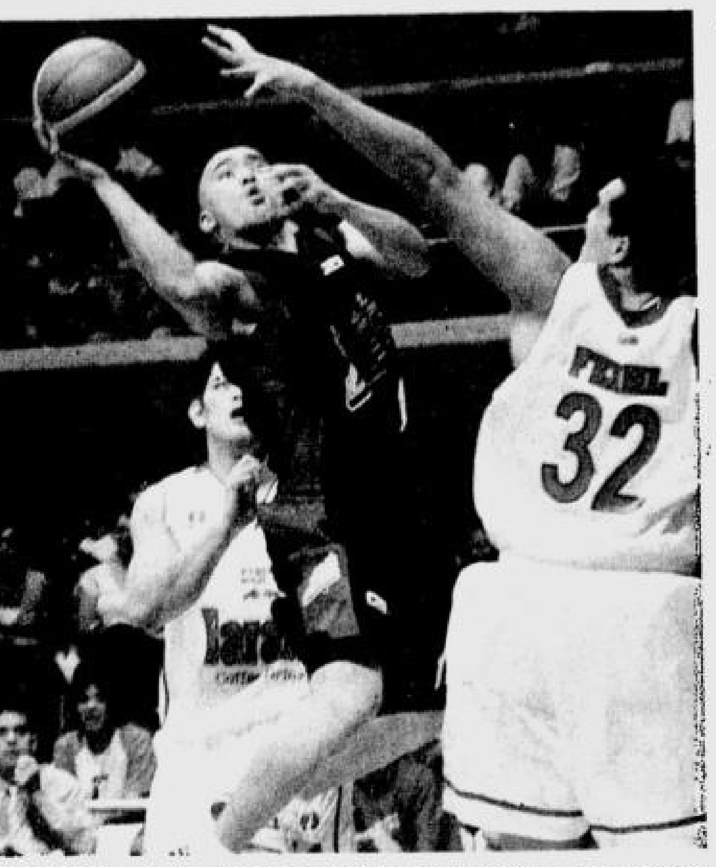
The Barako absorbed their eighth defeat in 14 games.

The scores:

ALASKA 96—Simpkins 26, Cortez 17, Cariaso 14, Allado 11, Padilla 8, Thoss 7, Hawkins 7, Hugnatan 4, Wilson 2, Johnson 0, Tejada 0, Duat 0.

RED BULL 87—Johnson 25, Villanueva 17, Ejercito 12, Ybañez 8, Asaytono 7, Tugade 6, Meneses 4, Feihl 4, Valenzuela 2 Torion 2, Robinson 0, Bagulo 0.

Quarters: 22-22, 43-39, 73-65, 96-87.



ALASKA'S Mike Cortez lays up against Red Bull's EJ Feihl. AUGUST DELA CRUZ

POC left us out in the cold—BAP

By Musong R. Castillo

THE BASKETBALL Association of the Philippines yesterday made it clear that it is not "reneging" on its agreement with the basketball working committee of the Philippine Olympic Committee.

As a matter of fact, Filomeno "Boy" Codiñera, the former baseball icon and VP of the BAP for the Visayas, pointed out that it is the PBA and the POC which have violated the agreement of the April 19 and 25 basketball summits.

"We are the ones being left out in the cold," Codiñera said. "The agreement clearly stated that the BAP will be involved in a joint committee. And where is that joint committee now?

"It has only been Chot (Reyes) here, Chot there. When Boysie (Zamar, the BAP appointed coach) goes to the practice sessions, he is ignored," Codiñera said. "So tell me, where is the involvement of the BAP there?"

Codiñera said the BAP despised the fact that they were bypassed when Reyes, the appointed coach of the POC working committee, put aspirants into the national training pool without even asking them for their input.

"They've been choosing and adding players to the RP team pool without clearance from us. *Eh, ano ba naman kami dito* (What are we here for)?

"Of course we need the PBA, because when we go to bigger tournaments like the Asian Games we need their players)," Codiñera added. "But we cannot see how can we be involved when we are not part of the joint committee that would form the team."

Meanwhile, POC president Jose "Peping" Cojuangco yesterday got full support from the executive committee in his bid to settle the BAP row. Cojuangco was given authority to levy penalties on the BAP if it violated the Olympic code.

RP 5 eyes Champions Cup, US stint

By Francis Ochoa

AFTER exhibition games against Iran and and Australia, national coach Chot Reyes and the RP training pool prepare for its first international competition against Asian teams, some of which will be beefed up by American imports.

And then the big thing—a tournament against NBA squads.

The national training pool will join the Asian Basketball Confederation (ABC) Champions Cup which the country will host starting May 29.

"We are ready for the hosting and the success of the staging shall contribute immensely to the country's bid to host the 2007 Fiba (international basketball federation) Asia championship for men, which is the qualifier for the 2008 Beijing Olympics," said Basketball Association of the Philippines (BAP) executive vice president Christian Tan.

The Champions Cup actually kicks off a busy schedule for the training pool, that will be highlighted by its participation in an NBA summer league tournament in Las Vegas in July, where the Philippines will play against NBA squads and some familiar foes from the Asian hoop scene.

"China plays there, Korea plays there and a lot of NBA teams [play there]," Reyes said of the Las Vegas pro tournament. "[It's the] summer league [of NBA teams], where they try out rookies and free agents."

Reyes has already secured an invitation from the Las Vegas organizers and forwarded it to the PBA board for approval.

"Our problem now is getting practice time," said Reyes. "Next practice namin May 16 and halos one week na lang, Champions Cup na."

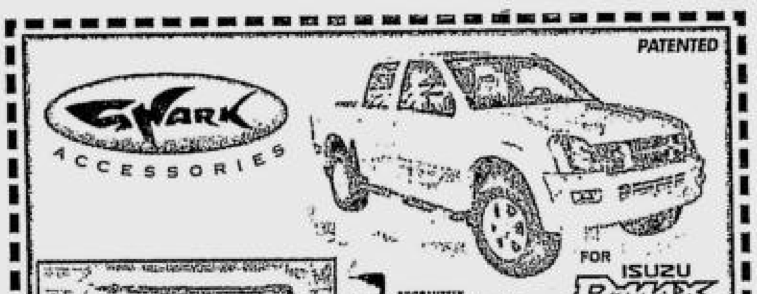
"That's another good competition. Iran is bringing in their 7-foot-5 guy, Jordan will be playing with imports. We're going to be playing All-Filipino so it's going to be a really good test for us."

Actually, teams in the Champions Cup usually field American imports.

"It's now going to be a difficult task for the coaching staff to pick the 12 players for the Champions Cup. The 12 we will pick for the Champions Cup is not the team we will be

RP 5/ A24

REYES: Tough task in choosing final 12.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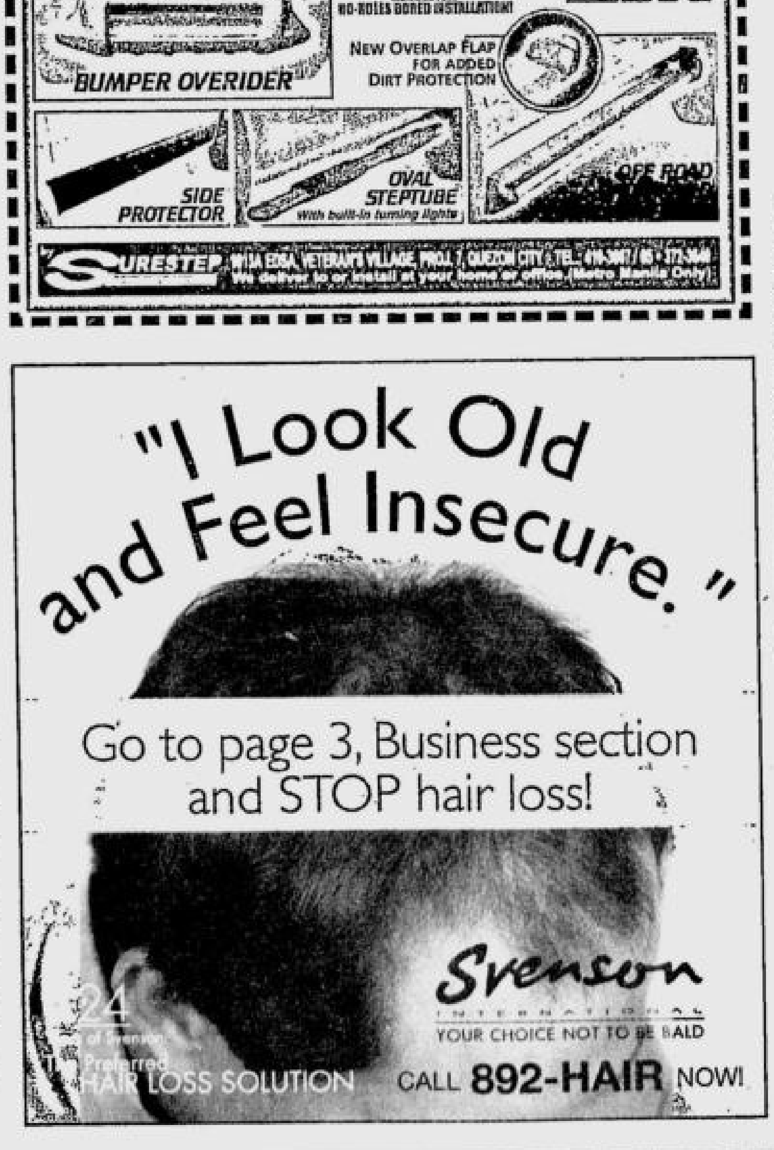
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13	12	11	10	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1
Demerits: 62	Demerits: 37	Demerits: 31	Demerits: 30	Demerits: 29	Demerits: 26	Demerits: 25	Demerits: 24	Demerits: 22	Demerits: 16	Demerits: 14	Demerits: 13	Demerits: 6

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Eastwood City EZ MAP

Team Iguana still up with perfect run

By Jasmine W. Payo

PEÑABLANCA—Amid the majestic limestone formation of Callao Cave, Team Iguana kept its lead on Day 4 of the Island Paradise Adventure Race here in Cagayan province on Tuesday night.

Team Iguana maintained its six overall demerit points by perfectly completing all tasks and finishing the fourth stage at the prescribed time of five hours and 32 minutes.

But the leading veteran adventure racers still remained cautious as the grueling nine-day auto rally moves to its next pit stop in Laoag, Ilocos Norte.

"There are now a lot of teams closing in," said Andrew Chinalpan Jr., who drove an orange Nissan Frontier with Orville Bernabe and Dennis Ararao. "A lot of things can still happen. We still have a long way to go and the rankings can change in an instant."

Model Illac Diaz, JC Leviste and Marc Leviste of Honda Blazers also maneuvered their silver Honda CRV flawlessly to keep second spot with 13 demerit points.

Other teams posting perfect scores in this stage were national triathlon record-holder Nonoy Jopson, Joaquin Moras and Niño Abarquez of Edge, who kept third spot in a Ford Ranger with 14 demerit points; fourth-placer Carlo Garchitorena, Rocky Garcia and Boyet Policarpio of Sideways, who had 16 demerit points in their Toyota Rav 4; and Team Tribu's Jerome, Jason and Renante Luengo, with 22 demerits in a Dodge Dakota. Cebu Black Shama, however, pulled out of the protest-marred stage, leaving only 13 teams to vie for the P1 million grand prize.

Flagged off in Bayombong, Nueva Vizcaya, the racers drove to several checkpoints in Isabela including the Balay Museum in Santiago City, Camp Vizcarra Ecology Park in Ramon and Tumauini Church, before reaching the finish line at the Callao Cave in Peñablanca, Cagayan.

"There weren't too many physical tasks in this stage, but the main challenge was finding directions," said the 35-year-old Bernabe after Team Iguana arrived at the pit stop first. "One of my teammates was familiar with the area so that was our advantage."

The 2,000-kilometer Luzon leg organized by the Department of Tourism requires racers to drive through tourist destinations at a set time and complete several physical and mental challenges. Teams are assessed point deductions for any time delay or failure to complete a task correctly.

ROCKY Garcia of Team Sideways during the cave challenge in Callao Cave, Peñablanca, Cagayan.
MELO VILLAREAL

NCR sustains Palaro drive

By Marc Anthony Reyes

ILOILO CITY—National Capital Region pulled away in the medal race with fresh victories in swimming and athletics yesterday but it was the sensational record performance of a local boy which caught everybody's fancy in the Palarong Pambansa at the Iloilo Sports Complex here.

NCR boosted its collection of gold medals to 24 at midday on top of 16 silvers and 12 bronzes in both the secondary and elementary competitions with Calabarzon and host Western Visayas trailing with 13-11-7 and 10-9-11 gold-silver-bronze tallies, respectively.

But under the new point system for this year's edition, the individual events won't be carrying a lot of weight than the team contests where WV and Calabarzon are expected to dominate.

The day's most brilliant feat came from Iloilo's Marlon Arlos, who led an impressive assault of the 1997 Palaro record in the secondary boys' 400-meter hurdles of Dionisio Maloto of Southern Tagalog.

Cheered by the huge hometown crowd, Arlos hurtled like a runaway train to win in 57.1 seconds with the next four runners behind him also surpassing the old 59.1 record.

Arlos' WV teammate John Rey Tizon took the silver in 57.5 seconds, Calabarzon's Jonar Minas was third in 58.1 and Joenelo Estocado of Bicol and Carl Marlon Sendico of Central Luzon were fourth and fifth with similar clockings of 58.2.

Clifford John Bonjoc of Central Visayas also created a stir when he bettered the mark in the secondary boys' discus throw.

He improved the 16-year-old 37.16 meters record of Tomas Yutuc with a remarkable 41.62 throw to give CV its first gold. NCR's Javier Gomez settled for second with a 38.69m feat.

"I wasn't expecting to break any record," said the incoming college freshman at the University of Cebu, who reportedly got scholarship offers from La Salle and Mapua.

Davao Region picked up its first gold through Quima Cuaton in the elementary girls javelin throw, while Northern Mindanao earned its second after Rommel Burdeos ruled the elementary boys, 400m hurdles. Calabarzon's Jasmine Chavez topped the secondary girls' 400m hurdles.

NCR nailed two gold medals in athletics through Lea Casilihan in the elementary girls' 400m (1:12.0)and Jeoffrey Ang in the secondary boys' high jump (1.75m).

Cordillera Autonomous Region and Calabarzon struck for two gold medals each in secondary boys' taekwondo, while Western Visayas and Region 12 matched those efforts in the girls side.

REGION 4-A Calabarzon's Maricel Mariano leaps to second place in the long jump of the athletics competition.
JESS YUSON

RP pool headed in right direction, says Aussie coach

By Francis Ochoa

HE KNOWS the international game so well, having coached the Australian national squad in the Athens Olympics.

And all Brian Goorjian needed was one look at the Philippine national training pool to know that Chot Reyes is headed in the right direction.

"What the Philippines lacks is size," Goorjian said. "Internationally, I was with Japan and you look at China and you look at Korea—they're putting two or three seven-footers [like] Yao Ming, Bateer [Mengke]."

"The style [Chot Reyes] is trying to develop with the running of the ball and the cutting and the ball movement—if you have somebody like a Yao Ming chasing you around, [then] the Philippines is playing to its advantage."

Impressive style

Goorjian coached the reigning Australian league champion Sydney Kings to a sweep of the two halves of the national training pool Monday and Tuesday and was impressed with the style of play the team was trying to develop.

"I think the coach is doing a good job of developing a style that will make your country competitive as a small team," he explained. "They did a good job executing offense and running stuff."

Team A of the training pool lost to the Kings, 63-59. Team B, which was loaded with such offensive talents like Eric Menk, Danny Seigle, Tony dela Cruz and Willie Miller, lost to a fully rested and better prepared Sydney squad, 104-91.

"[Team B] did stuff one-on-one and made plays especially in the fourth quarter when they needed a comeback," Goorjian said. [Team A] had trouble finding avenues to score. [Team B] had no problem getting by our guys and creating their shots."

Goorjian said that the best players from both halves of the pool will be competitive in the Asian scene.

Fighting spirit

"With those two teams, if you pick 10 players, you can come up with good quickness and guys who can really shoot the ball," said Goorjian. "[With a combined team], I think they would have won the first one. I would have hoped for a split.

Even the Australian players who have had experience internationally were impressed with the RP pool.

"They're competitive and they have a lot of fighting spirit," said Brett Wheeler, a 34-year-old big man who once played for the Australian national men's team.

Shooter Bradley Sheridan said the Filipinos were "on the right track. I think you have a very good basketball foundation here."

"They've got very good athletes and really talented players," said David Barlow, a former player of Australia's junior squad like Sheridan.

Better than China

Before coming to the Philippines, the Sydney Kings topped the Singapore Cup, where they had a chance to battle against club teams from China, Korea and Jordan. Goorjian said the Philippine pool was "better than the Chinese team and they were better than the Korean team we played."

"But the Jordan team, I think, was a little better," said Goorjian, noting, however, that Jordan was powered by two American reinforcements. "We played quite a few international teams and this was one of the better teams we played."

RP-BAP team faces Taguig today

TAGUIG—The beleaguered RP-BAP men's training team will be out to prove its worth today when it goes up against unbeaten Forward Taguig in the 2005 Panasonic-NBC national basketball championship at the C.P. Tinga gym here.

Coach Boysie Zamar's cagers, who are preparing for the Seaba championship next month in Singapore, are expected to have their hands full against Mayor Freddie Tinga's boys in the 6 p.m. contest.

Formerly known as RP-Cebuana Lhuillier, Zamar's squad is a guest team in the tourney sponsored by Panasonic, Accel, Molten, Spring Cooking Oil, Sulpicio Lines, Philtranco, Cebu Pacific, Sunbolt Energy Drink, Nature's Spring, Far Eastern Insurance, Skygo Motorcycles, Sirlitz Solutions Provider, Prime Channel, Ping Ping Lechon, Bayview Park Hotel and Holiday Plaza-Cebu.

Zamar, whose team's shocking loss to Parañaque Jets in the pre-season led to its disbanding, bared his plans to get the Nationals to play 35 tuneup games before the Seaba tilt.

The team's mainstays are KG Canaleta, Pep Moore, Samigue Eman, Edrick Ferrer, Dondon Villamin, Richard Melencio, Dennis Madrid, Mel Latoreno, Ruben dela Rosa, Francis Sanz, Chris Cantonjos and Ricky Calimag.

Over at the MSU-Iligan Institute of Technology gym in Iligan, Mayor Lawrence Cruz's Crusaders will host the Iloilo Warriors of the Iloilo Basketball League led by Robert Uy also at 6 p.m. today.

Camel race visits Visayas

THE CAMEL Supercross International Championship Series 2005 returns to the limelight with the staging of two more action-packed legs in the Visayas cities of Iloilo and Bacolod beginning May 22.

Now on its 16th year, the event will be held anew at the Sta. Barbara International Raceway in Iloilo City on May 22 and the Talisay Stadium in Bacolod City on June 19.

The races are follow-ups to the successful legs in Roxas City and Bacolod City held late last year as part of Camel's 15th motocross anniversary.

"We're very happy to hold two more races of the Camel Supercross series in the Visayas," said JT International Phils. Brand marketing manager Edward A. Cruz.

Spicing up this year's competition is the participation of top international supercross champions who are expected to provide strong challenge to the Filipino contingent, led by eight-time national champion Glenn Aguilar, Jovie Saulog and Bebet de la Cruz.

National Motorcycle Sports and Safety Association (NAMSSA) president Ken Falco said the entry of Tadakazu Otsuka of Japan and James Robinson of New Zealand in the Iloilo race and Chaiyan Romphan of Thailand in the Bacolod race is expected to raise the level of competition.

JOVIE Saulog faces tough competition.

U-Ha battles Sphere for RIFA girls trophy

JESSICA Ryon struck the back of the net twice to lift the U-Ha Girls FC to a 2-1 victory over Immaculate Conception Academy to advance to the finals of the RIFA 9-a-side summer football tournament at the Miriam pitch yesterday.

Mia Sumulong and Zoe Richards, on the other hand, scored a goal apiece to lead Colegio San Agustin/Hed Center to a 2-1 win against Miriam College's Under-18 squad.

The championship is at 4:30 p.m. today, also at the Miriam pitch.

In the title match, Sphere will lean on four RP Team potentials—keeper Haya Ibarra, Marti Plaza (defense), Sam Nierras (midfield) and Monica Santos.

The four are expected to be the target of U-Ha defenders in this afternoon's showdown.

Sphere had earlier creamed Miriam, 6-1, and then beat U-Ha, 2-nil to sweep the second round and top the group stage of the tournament.

Bob Manlulo, head coach for Miriam, is the organizer and tournament commissioner.

AF3 race: Sy charges from last to third

TYSON Sy (in car) with actress and friend Krista Ranillo in a file photo taken during the AF3 first leg at the Batangas Racing Circuit.

RISING star Tyson Sy finished third in the wet and slippery fourth round of the Asian Formula Three Series 2005, which was held at the Zhuhai International Circuit in Guangdong, China, recently.

The 17-year-old Filipino, who failed to start in Round 3 after his engine lost a cylinder in qualifying and couldn't be replaced in time, was forced to start Round 4 from 14th and last.

Sy executed a flawless take-off and took advantage of the chaos on turn one to weave his way through the twisting maze of cars that included compatriots Renan Morales, Enzo Pastor, JP Tuason, Dado Pena and 2003 AF3 champion Pepon Marave; Ireland's John O'Hara, James Winslow of the UK, Moreno Soeprapto of Indonesia,, Briton Greg Murphy and Rodolfo Avila of Macau.

On the approach to Turn 10, Sy, the 2004 Philippine National Formula 3 champion, surpassed Lee Farrell to take third spot behind 2004 AF3 titlist Christian Jones of Australia and Indonesian Ananda Mikola.

Jones stayed in the lead even as Sy chased down series leader Mikola around the 4.3 km-long track until he was just a few meters behind. With the track drying out, however, Sy elected to hold station and secure valuable points in the championship. The trio kept their positions until the checkered flag.

"As I closed in on Ananda I remembered my brush with O'Hara in Batangas that put me out of the race," Sy said. "I decided that scoring points was more important than trying to take second place away from him, so I simply backed off. After all, there are still eight rounds to go in the series."

RP 5 . . .

From page A23

sending to the ABC [tournament]."

The ABC championships serves as qualifier for the World Championships and the Olympics.

"The Champion's Cup will be treated as an exhibition match where we can find out what we want to find out," Reyes explained.

After the Champions Cup, and the Las Vegas tournament, the training pool will also join the Jones Cup in August. There is also the PBA goodwill tournament and an exhibition event in Brunei. After that, it's off to Qatar for the ABC World Championship qualifying tournament.

The draw of the Champions Cup will be held today at the Fiba office in Kuala Lumpur, said BAP secretary general Graham Lim.

Defending champion Lebanon, Kazakhstan, Syria, Iran, Korea, Jordan, Qatar, India and Kuwait are the other countries joining the event.

Heat, Spurs grab 2-0 lead

MIAMI—Dwyane Wade had 31 points, including a critical three-point play with 1:05 left, and added a career-high 15 assists to help the Miami Heat stay perfect in these playoffs with a 108-102 victory Tuesday over the Washington Wizards.

Miami leads the Eastern Conference semifinal series 2-0. Game 3 is Thursday at Washington, where the Heat have won 11 times in their last 14 tries.

Eddie Jones added 21 points, Shaquille O'Neal 16 and Damon Jones 14. Udonis Haslem had a 14-point, 13-rebound effort for Miami.

"It's kind of like pick your poison," Wade said. "You can either let me shoot or you can give somebody a layup. And tonight they came up on me, so some other guys got layups."

Antawn Jamison, playing with tendinitis in his right knee, had a playoff career-high 32 points for Washington. Gilbert Arenas added 28 for the Wizards, but the third member of their high-scoring trio, Larry Hughes, missed his first 11 shots and finished with 15 points on 5-for-17 shooting.

Wade made 10 of 15 shots and grabbed seven rebounds. In the first three quarters, Miami had 29 baskets, 22 either made by Wade or set up by his passes.

"We didn't take care of anything that we wanted to take care of," Heat coach Stan Van Gundy said. "And we won the game."

Jamison hit a floater from four meters (12 feet) with 1:24 left to bring Washington within five, but Wade responded with a three-point play 19 seconds later. He drove past Arenas, darted left, drew contact from Jamison, changed hands with the ball and scored. The free throw gave Miami a 105-97 lead.

In San Antonio, Manu Ginobili came off the bench and livened the offense with his usual array of layups and long jumpers, making nine of 11 shots and scoring 28 points to lead San Antonio over Seattle, 108-91.

"I made a couple of three-pointers and that made my confidence go up higher," Ginobili said. "Once we get close to the paint, we try to finish the play or get fouled. That's our plan."

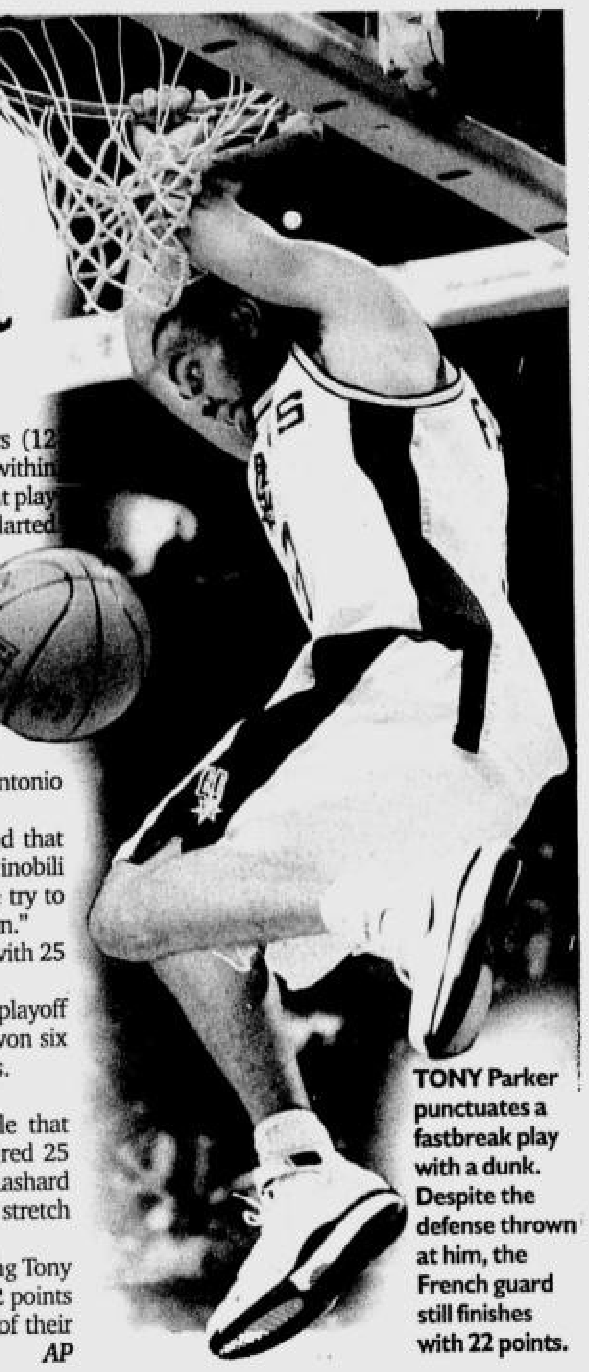
Tim Duncan was his usual steady self with 25 points and nine rebounds.

Since a stunning loss at home in the playoff opener against Denver, the Spurs have won six straight by an average margin of 16 points.

Game 3 in Seattle is Thursday.

Ray Allen shook off a sprained ankle that knocked him out of the opener and scored 25 points in 42 minutes for the Sonics. Rashard Lewis scored 22. The Sonics even had a stretch of 22 points scored by that duo.

The Sonics did a better job of containing Tony Parker, but the point guard still scored 22 points and helped the Spurs make 53 percent of their shots. *AP*



TONY Parker punctuates a fastbreak play with a dunk. Despite the defense thrown at him, the French guard still finishes with 22 points.

Pampanga battles Makati in finals

TEAM Pampanga turned the tables on early favorite Team MayniLA, 6-4, on Monday to arrange a finals showdown with Team Makati in the Crossover Phase of the TM 9-ball Champions League set May 16 at the SM Manila.

Pampanga's triumph sent Team MayniLA of Arnold "Ali" Atienza out of the National Capital Region finals picture and allowed Makati, a 6-3 winner over Team Pangasinan, to make it the First Phase finals.

The finals of this event presented by Touch Mobile with support from Accel, Brunswick, Aqua Ronz and SM will be held starting at 5 pm.

Burlington Cup Sunday

THE FOURTH season of the Burlington Friendship Cup, the cage tournament among sports-minded companies, commences on May 15 at the Philippine Buddhacare Academy Gym in Quezon City. This was jointly announced by Ruddy Tan, GM of Burlington Industries Phils. Inc., and Teddy S. Pereña of Total Events and Athlete Management (TEAM) Inc., organizers of the annual project backed by Memory Magic and Jimac and aimed at promoting fitness among employees of participating firms. Leading the list of teams is defending champion GNC of the Borromeos. Also entered are Memory Magic, Wilcome Builders, Shocks XT, Philippine Star, Monica Publishing, LA Gear, Chloe Lighting, LLQC-Tnogs and Amigo Steel.

Toyota Otis tests Harbour Centre

TOYOTA Otis-Letran will try to bring another heavyweight down today when the Knights collide with Harbour Centre in a PBL Unity Cup encounter that could very well paint a clearer picture on who will take the outright semifinals seats.

The Knights, inspired by a recent huge victory over Welcoat, go into the 4 p.m. game at the Pasig Sports Center bent on avenging a heart-rending loss from the Port Masters in the first round.

A win gives Letran a tie for second with the Port Masters while a loss virtually secures for Harbour Centre the second outright spot in the Final Four phase behind idle leader Montaña Pawnshop.

Meanwhile, Kenny Williams, the dazzling Fil-American included in the national training pool, debuts for struggling defending champion Magnolia today.

The Ice Cream Wizards clash with winless Nenaco-San Beda in the 2 p.m. contest.

"Our initial target was to finish (the elimination round) in the top four for a twice-to-beat incentive (in the quarterfinals)," coach Louie Alas said after the win over the Paint Masters last Saturday.

"But if the opportunity to make the semifinals outright presents itself, we will definitely grab it."

While practically the rest of the field have been making a living on offense, the Knights are coming into games with the mind-set of shutting down their foes.

Ardie Larong, a discovery from Cebu, is the focal point of the Letran defense.

"He can defend against anybody, be it a small man or a big man," Alas said. *Musong Castillo*

Ateneo brings act to Shakey's V-League

ATENEO de Manila University, a school rich in basketball history and tradition, brings its act to the volleyball court as it joins arch rival De La Salle University and four other teams in pursuit of glory in the first conference of the 2005–2006 season of the Shakey's V-League firing off Saturday at the Ateneo Blue Eagle gym.

Although they don't have the depth and experience of the UST Tigresses and the Lady Archers, winners of the league's first two conferences, the Loyola-based spikers remain confident of a good showing as they vowed to create an impact on their first stint in the Shakey's-backed league.

Coach Luis Gepuela has tapped the services of national player Monica Aleta and former PSC mainstays Amy Guangco and Ers Iratay to reinforce the team, which includes Steff Veluz, Alexa Pijuan, Trisha Limgenco, Karla Bello, Iris Ortega, Starr Cabuco, Charo Soriano, Nika Felix, Patti Taganas, Apol del Puerto and Charlie Tan, who also saw action for the PSC in the last conference.

"It is a big plus for the league to have Ateneo in its fold and we're very sure that its entry will further help generate interest in the league," said Emilio "Jun" Bernardino, president of the organizing Sports Vision Management Group, Inc.

"We always believe in SVMGI's vision to bring back the glory days of women's volleyball besides making the Shakey's V-League a breeding ground for (volleyball) talents," says Shakey's general manager Vic Gregorio.

The event is backed by IBC-13, Jemah Television, ACCEL and Mikasa.

The other teams competing in the double-round elims and double-round semis are San Sebastian, Lyceum and Far Eastern University.

SPORTSWATCH

LGV golfers top intervillage east

LOYOLA Grand Villas (LGV) pulled off a big surprise in the Nokia intervillage golf tournament, pooling 294 points under the Stableford scoring system and ruling the first round of the east sector phase at the Forest Hills Golf Club in Antipolo Tuesday. Johnny Pineda came through with 39 points to lead the LGV golfers in the 12-to-play, 8-to-count format event. Tony de Ubago tossed in 38 points while Rodolfo Santos, Mon Peralejo and Manuel Bernabe added 37 points each. The combined team of Cinco Hermanos and Monte Vista submitted 275 while Valle Verde 3 and 5 posted 269, setting up an interesting showdown when these villages in San Juan, Pasig and Marikina clash in the final 18 holes on June 6.

New Balance run listing ends May 15

DEADLINE for registration for the New Balance Power Race is set May 15 with the addition of team competitions in the corporate level and in the collegiate ranks. The two new events are expected to spice up action in the country's premier running event firing off May 29 at the Fort Bonifacio Global City. Seven members, employed by the company for at least one year, will compose a corporate team while four runners of the same school will make up a college squad. Entry fee is pegged at P150 per member. Registration centers are at the Race Office, Vasquez Madrigal Plaza Bldg., Greenhills, San Juan; New Balance Festival Supermall, second level, Filinvest, Alabang; New Balance Glorietta, ground floor, Glorietta 4, Makati City; The Athletes Foot, Robinson's Ermita, second level, Robinson's Place Ermita; Planet Sports Rockwell, second level, Power Plant Mall, Makati City; and The Athletes Foot Galleria, third level, Robinson's Galleria, Ortigas. For details, log on to www.nbpowerrace.com.

Anton rules MP Turbo Guam race

BAGUIO CITY—2003 Philippine national touring car champion Carlos Anton of MP Turbo dominated the final round of the Guam Road Racers Autocross series held at Guam International Raceway on May 1. Anton topped the stock class with a time of 1:32.393, beating the then undefeated Anthony Crisostomo of Guam (1:32.550). In the street modified class where most competitors are members of the Sports Car Club of America (SCCA), the Baguio-based Anton clocked in at 1:26.559, almost two seconds clear of the Guam series champion Adrian Banu (1:28.257). ***PDI Northern Luzon Bureau***

Olympians fete Milo sports program

THE PHILIPPINE Olympians Association (POA) recently honored Milo with its first ever Arete Award, in recognition of its active participation and commitment to sports development in the Philippines. The Arete Awards is presented to individuals, organizations or institutions who have greatly contributed to sports development in the Philippines. POA honored Milo for its continued support of Filipino athletes, as well as its role in the promotion and development of sports in the grassroots level. Currently, Milo is conducting the Milo Summer Sports Clinics in over 1,200 venues around the country.

All imported stakes series slated

MANILA Jockey Club, Inc. (MJCI) hosts spectacular racing event, the Philracom-sponsored "All Imported Stakes Series-II" on May 15 at the San Lazaro Leisure Park in Carmona, Cavite. The race features the country's top caliber imported horses that will compete for the top prize of P270,000.00. The runner-up will take home P101,250.00; third placer gets P56,250.00 and fourth finisher pockets P22,500.00. Meanwhile, the Metropolitan Association of Race Horse Owners' (MARHO) will mark its 31st founding anniversary with the staging of a two-day racing festival dubbed as the MARHO Founders' Cup Racefest on May 28-29.

PCSO FIRST GENTLEMAN
SILVER CUP
2005
SANTA ANA PARK

HORSE owner Alex Mamon (center), representing C&H Enterprises, holds the coveted PCSO First Gentleman Silver Cup and a giant check worth P1.1 million following the victory of their horse Cover Girl in the prestigious classic race held last Sunday at the Santa Ana Park.

NCA championship gets going

MT. PANAMAO of Rep. Gerry Boy Espina and Thunderbird Firefly I of Big Dome owner Jorge "Nene" Araneta are the leading entries today when the National Cockers Association (NCA) 7-Cock Derby championship round gets going at the Araneta Coliseum. Both entries posted three wins each Tuesday night during the qualifying round. Binangonan Balbina of Gov. Ito Ynares and former ambassador Danding Cojuangco tallied 2.5 points to stay within striking distance. Meanwhile, all is set for the next NCA derby on May 17 and 19. Also slated is the 7-cock promotion of Vice Gov. Boyet Joson, Ellan Nagano and Greenwood Group on May 31 and June 2. Interested parties may call 9113101 and 9112928 for details.

Big gamers unleash pricey birds

THIRTY big-time cockers are all set to unleash their millionaire gamebirds when the Big Event Part II 6–Cock Derby unfolds on Saturday, May 14 at the air-conditioned Las Piñas Coliseum. Sabong idol Patrick Antonio, one of the organizers, said that only in this kind of derby do bigtime cockers field their ace gamebirds. An ace is more than three years old and have won at least five times. The event will be hosted by GCAP Klub 330 and sponsored by Sagupaan Complexor 3000. Also fielding their best fighters are boxing champion Manny Pacquiao and Wakee Salud. For other inquiries, please contact 8731040 and 8743910.

Getting down to business

SPECTATOR

Al S. Mendoza

PEPING Cojuangco is not only proving to be a man of action. He is also showing some guts, a stance that is vital to a man holding the country's No. 1 position in sports.

When Peping, who is barely in his fifth month as president of the Philippine Olympic Committee (POC), convened a committee to find ways to strengthen the country's stand in basketball, he hit a bull's eye, so to speak. His move was not only timely. It also infused a new hope for the nation's favorite pastime to finally resurface as a sport no longer wracked by divisive forces with hidden agenda.

All of them were there. They were smiling at and civil to each other. They behaved like kids suddenly lined up, whipped into action, by their drillmaster.

It was a historic meeting called by Peping to forge a covenant and put an end to the bickering and in-fighting that had sullied the good name of the sport we had fallen in love with from the day Caloy Loyzaga electrified the world by being named to the Mythical 5 in the 1954 World Basketball Championship in Brazil.

In the first meeting on April 19, Erap's birthday, all the stakeholders agreed to form a working basketball committee to be headed by, who else, but Peping Cojuangco. Everybody was in high spirits that, after the gathering, each of them went home wearing a smile.

The April 19 meeting was validated when, on April 25, the stakeholders adopted a resolution calling on the Basketball Association of the Philippines (BAP) to "extend its full cooperation to the Working Committee of POC president Cojuangco."

All seemed to be going well when, suddenly, BAP president Tiny Literal jolted us with his decision to back away from the covenant forged by Peping. In other words, it's back to square one: BAP is again telling us, "We do it our own way, the way it used to be."

The part that astounds me is, Literal and his board also kicked out Go Teng Kok as BAP project director for the 2007 Fiba-ABC in Manila. GTK's crime, they said, was he "hoodwinked Literal into signing a statement" that backed the resolution adopted by the basketball working committee headed by Peping Cojuangco. It was even said that Literal, who was accompanied by his son when shown the document reportedly in the presence of Robert Aventajado and Joey Romasanta, did not have his reading glasses when he signed it, thus "making it hard for Literal to read the statement being attributed to him" before signing it.

If you can believe all that, then you can also believe that jueteng does not exist, has never existed, in this benighted country of ours.

To me, Literal did not even have to sign anything in the first place. The fact that several of his minions in the BAP, including his seemingly unsinkable secretary general, Graham Lim, signed that resolution to abide themselves to the decisions made by the working basketball committee headed by Peping Cojuangco, is more than enough proof of BAP's commitment to finally unite with all the nation's stakeholders in basketball.

Maybe they had also been "hoodwinked" into signing the resolution?

Darn.

The warning from Peping to impose sanction on the BAP should BAP really decide to dishonor its commitment to the resolution adopted in the meetings of April 19 and April 25 should be fair warning to all: Peping means business.

Now, if you still don't know up to now why sports in this country is retrogressing instead of progressing, you were really born yesterday.

Darn.

***

FASTBREAK. Migel, the brother of Mayo and Dada, turns four today. Happy birthday, Migel... Welcome home to Ting Valenton Mendoza and her son, Jonas (birthday boy tomorrow, May 13), who both flew in from Toronto on Tuesday, May 10, together with Ting's mother, Tia Nene.

INQBOX
Win this *Inquirer mug
Question of the Week
More than 90 journalists have been killed in the Philippines since 1986. The Committee to Protect Journalists has identified the Philippines as "the most murderous country for journalists," followed by Iraq, Colombia, Bangladesh and Russia. What should be done to stop the killings?
Senders of d best 20 texts as publishd in Tuesday's INQBOX *wiL each receiv an *Inquirer Mug! Ü*
Key in: inquirer box name/age/city/message.
Text your answers to 2207 (Globe) or 283 (Smart).
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inquirer ad name/age/city/mailing address
to 2207 or 283 as their prizes will be mailed to them

TAKE FIVE

Real challenges for Paolo B

DO YOU have other names aside from Paolo?

People call me Pao. I kinda like it. When people call me that, I feel like they're comfortable with me.

With an O, right?

With an O. Pet peeve ko *'yung* when they spell it with a U, although my birth certificate says Paulo Antonio. Some people close to me, when they want to bug me, they call me Antonio. Like, "Antonio, *halika*."

What's your middle name?

Barba

Are you related to Vittorio Barba?

He would be my mom's sister—no, brother, I'm sorry. So I am related to the Marcoses. My mom's mom is the sister of Ferdinand Marcos.

Do you have brothers and sisters?

Three sisters—one older and two younger. My *ate* is in Paris. At first she was there to teach the French how to speak English. Now she is working at the House of Dior. I think she is in Cannes right now. She used to teach English at St. Scholatica's College and it was always her dream to go to Paris.

So you're ...

... the only guy. I grew up with four women. I guess that's why I'm comfortable with women. My youngest sister is 15. I'm 31, and I'm sending her to school. The other day she said, "*Kuya*, I have a question." I was like, "Yeah, what?" You know we are very *malambing*. "Um," she said, "how will I go to college?" I'm like, "Do you have any more stupid questions? Of course I will send you to college."

How did she become your responsibility?

I took it upon myself. When I was in college, I wanted to pay for my own tuition—which is why intermittently, I would take modeling jobs, to earn a little extra. I even tried to go to law school. I loved modeling, but it didn't love me [back]. I was competent, [but] not excellent. So ... eventually, I decided hosting was it. As with modeling before, I got a lot of rejections, made a lot of mistakes, but everything fell into place.

How did you shift from modeling to hosting?

The big break would be Binibining Pilipinas 1998. But before that, I had to go through a really depressing time.

Can you tell us one depressing story?

I went to about 200 VTRs and got about three projects out of those. And I would sometimes walk the ramp for P500. Then once, I was doing a beer commercial and on rehearsal day, I was supposed to look lustfully at my co-star, and I could not. My face is apparently not meant to look lustfully at anyone. I lost the role.

What's the heart and soul of "Extra Challenge"?

The staff and the crew. We have a very dynamic staff that constantly comes up with ideas. I mean, you do one challenge, that's one less challenge you can do. We have 52 weeks in a year and we've been going-on for nearly two years.

Was the McDo commercial a challenge for you?

I'm not gonna lie; it was. But I'm up to any challenge. When I saw the storyboard, I was so excited. They asked me, "Are you willing to do this? You'd be tied up and everything." Oh, cool, you know...

How long were you tied up?

Four hours, I think.

Where do you see yourself five, 10 years from now? Hopefully, still on TV. A long, long time ago I made a decision, would I go for the superstar [status] or would I go for longevity? The latter looked more attractive. A lot of people ask me "Are you intimidated by all the young people who come in, better looking and..." Yeah they're better looking, yeah they have better bodies, and maybe some of them are more articulate. But I have a head start on experience, and I have the sincerity, which cannot be taught. But if anyone comes up to me who wants to be a host, I'm always willing to teach him everything. But I start by saying, I cannot teach him sincerity. Hosting is a craft, an art.

Are you tutoring anyone right now?

I wouldn't call it tutoring. It's more like, I give seminars. For free. I go to different schools and I say, okay, all we need is a venue. You provide the venue, [get me] 15, 20 students, I'll teach Hosting 101. I have a syllabus, I go to different schools and do that. And sometimes, when I'm hosting a gig and there's a long break, and I'm with a new co-host who wants to break into the scene, I teach him/her. I share whatever I know. But one thing I make them understand is that nothing good ever came easy. Hosting is not just about reading or memorizing your lines. You have to feel it, you have to really mean what you say. You should become more sensitive to your surroundings, learn to be a little more attuned to what's happening.

How do you unwind?

I work. After work, I work. Work takes easily more than 60, 70 percent of my time; sleep probably 10. That's about five hours. Anyway, I get to [take naps], like when I travel from here to there, I sleep in the car. If I have a nice comfortable pillow, that's all I need. I'm what they call "*masa—masandal lang*, okay *na*." I'd clear a table, lie down there, I'm snoring in two minutes. That's an art.

That's really how you unwind?

There's also badminton, and the gym. I workout as often as I can.

Yes, you own a badminton court!

I do, but I can't play there, it's always full.

> Give him a room and students, and the celebrity host will train them in emceeing, for free. He actually has a syllabus titled 'TV Hosting 101'

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3 XXX 2: STATE OF THE UNION
4 IN GOOD COMPANY
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5 XXX 2

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6 XXX 2

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Jade Cinema (Angeles City) tel (045) 887.5001 to 03
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2 CAN THIS BE LOVE
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4 WEDDING DATE

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1 CAN THIS BE LOVE
2 GUESS WHO
3 (DOLBY) KINGDOM OF HEAVEN
4 (DTS) WEDDING DATE

Cine Nepo (Dagupan City) tel (075) 515.8489
1 CAN THIS BE LOVE
2 HIDE AND SEEK
3 (DOLBY) WEDDING DATE
4 (DTS) ONG BAK

Centre Plaza Cinema (Balanga, Bataan) tel (047) 237.7007
1 CAN THIS BE LOVE
2 HIDE AND SEEK

Lianas Cinema (Alabang) tel 850.1276
1 (SDDS) KID
2 TAGOS SA LAMAN
3 KIROT SA DIBDIB
4 (DTS) ALONE IN THE DARK

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3 (DTS) KINGDOM OF HEAVEN
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3 (DTS) GUESS WHO
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2 THE PACIFIER
3 THE JACKET
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Araneta Center Leisure Guide

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HOUSE OF WAX E Cuthbert, C M Murray, P Hilton
XXX 2: STATE OF THE UNION Ice Cube
CAN THIS BE LOVE Sandara Park, Hero Angeles
HEAD IN THE CLOUDS Charlize Theron, Penelope Cruz
GUESS WHO Bernie Mac, Ashton Kutcher
GLOBE PLATINUM CINEMA Pre-Opening Screenings - KINGDOM OF HEAVEN

ALI MALL CINEMAS
① CAN THIS BE LOVE Sandara Park, Hero Angeles
② KINGDOM OF HEAVEN Orlando Bloom, Liam Neeson
③ XXX 2: STATE OF THE UNION Ice Cube
④ IN GOOD COMPANY Dennis Quaid, Topher Grace
⑤ AMITYVILLE HORROR Ryan Reynolds, Melissa George
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ARANETA COLISEUM EVENTS
2005 PBA FIESTA CONFERENCE May 13
4:45pm Shell vs. Talk N Text / 7:35pm Purefoods vs. Red Bull
THE 'C' SHOW May 21, Saturday, 8pm
KEVYN LETTAU: MEMORIES OF LOVE May 14, Saturday, 8pm
ASHANTI LIVE IN MANILA May 26, Thursday, 8pm

CENTER EVENTS
EXHIBITS: The Saturday Group Art Exhibit featuring the works of the premier artists' group in the country including Mauro "Malang" Santos until May 15 at the Upper Ground Floor of Gateway Mall
NEW STORES: Fully Booked (Level 2), Time Zone (Level 3), Cello (Ground Floor) & and Kashieca (Level 3); all at Gateway Mall
PERFORMANCES: Guarana, Acoustic Jive, Arthur Manuntag / Romy Posadas & Friends are set to perform on May 13, 14 & 15 respectively at The Gateway Pavilion.
LOG ON TO www.aranetacenter.net FOR MORE DETAILS OR TO SUBSCRIBE TO OUR WEEKLY E-MAIL ENTERTAINMENT UPDATES

TIKOY Aguiluz

Indie summit in June

THE 7th CINEMANILA International Film Festival, in cooperation with the Göteborg Film Festival Fund and Hubert Bals Fund, invites independent Filipino feature filmmakers to join the Cinema Indio Summit on June 15, 2005 and the Script and Pitch Workshop from June 16 to 18.

The events are in connection with the 2nd Boracay International Co-Production Meeting, where two winning film projects will each receive $10,000.

Cinemanila International Film Festival Director Amable "Tikoy" Aguiluz said a three-day workshop would be held on subjects ranging from pitching a script, financing, packaging a film, co-production opportunities, festivals to attend, market distribution and protecting one's self from anomalous film contracts.

Visit http://www.cinemanila.com.ph for more information.

More Pinoy sightings on cable TV

VIEWFINDER

Nestor U. Torre

ON THE "Today" show on the ETC channel, **Katie Couric** and **Matt Lauer** recently featured the cast of a new musical about a spelling bee (of all things). Well, what do you know, one of the principal roles in the show was played by Fil-Am singer-actor **Jose Llana.**

Even better, the cast did a musical number, and Llana got to display his pleasing vocal pipes in it. Best of all, Katie got into the act, and Llana did some comic byplay with the popular TV host.

Next, on "The Casino" on Show World, **Martin Nievera** recently got an unexpected feature. No, he didn't perform in the reality drama show, which was shot at the Golden Nugget casino in Las Vegas, where Nievera performed last year.

Rather, his poster was seen in an elevaor shot, and his name was mentioned in an in-house plug heard by the people inside the elevator, urging casino patrons to catch his nightly show at the venue's showroom.

Next, on **Lauren Ezersky**'s popular TV show about fashion, "Beyond the Velvet Rope," Fil-Am designer **Cesar Galindo** and his latest collection were recently featured.

Galindo got raves from Ezersky, who exulted over his designs' "impeccable tailoring and colors, really sexy look, wonderful contrast between starkness and lush colors"—etc.! You can't get headier praise than that from fashion icon Lauren, and Galindo was properly grateful!

Finally, the popular US show biz program "ET" (Entertainment Tonight) has an eye-catching new correspondent in the person of Fil-Am **Venessa Minnilo.** We caught her recently on the cable show and found her a vivacious combination of beauty and bubbly energy.

As the show's New York correspondent, Vanessa gets to report on and interview some of the biggest names in the biz. But she refuses to get fazed by the challenge of standing up to all that blinding star power (without having to put on dark glasses, yet).

The way Vanessa performs and registers on the show, we believe that she's meant for bigger and better things in television. Truth to tell, she's more viewable than some of the program's veteran co-hosts, and could be stepping into their shoes as early as next season.

Sure, that's a biased observation, but Vanessa is worth going out on a limb for, as far as looks and talent go.

Another plus factor for her is the fact that she's Fil-Am, and thus is easier for minority viewers to empathize with. And, if you add up all of the minority groups in the States, especially in California, they add up to an impressive majority that TV producers would be stupid not to want to appeal to.

So, Vanessa, do your darndest this season, because this could be your time to shine!

Movies on TV

ON HBO, today at 8:55 a.m., "Clueless." Tomorrow at 1 p.m., "Superman 2." 7:40 p.m., "Joe's Apartment." 11 p.m., "Catch Me If You Can."

On Cinemax, May 12 at 9:45 p.m., "Ghost of Mississippi." 5:15 p.m., "A Perfect World." May 13 at 11:45 a.m., "Scenes of the Crime."

Workshop

STARTING May 13, a six-day Film and Production Management Workshop will be held by Golden Media productions. The workshop will be conducted by veteran practictioners **Pong de Leon** and **Marjorie Lachica.** It covers script and production breakdown, schedule and budget preparation, budget analysis, etc.

Culminating recitals

GANTIMPALA Theater Foundation's summer workshops will be presenting their culminating recitals at 4:30 p.m. on May 14 at the Concert at the Park auditorium. Culminating presentations are "Sundalong Patpat," Dalagang Broadway," and "Bakit Babae ang Naghuhugas ng Pinggan," featuring the workshoppers of Ballet and Arts Center. Call 528-0603.

Moonrise Film Festival

THE FIRST Moonrise Film Festival invites documentary filmmakers to submit their productions focusing on the Philippines' environment and culture. Deadline is May 31. The festival will be held in August. Call 721-7360 for more information.

Gary Estrada cast in . . .

From page A29

Her character is so desperate for higher program ratings that she exposes not only what goes on behind the pageant, but delves even into the private lives of the contestants.

That way, the movie turns out to be not just another sex-comedy but a satire. Still, Direk Jeffrey assures that audiences will enjoy watching the film, because aside from the parade of sexy bodies, "this film goes beyond the sex comedy genre. It's a satire which comments on a serious issue in a funny way."

(For feedback, e-mail wateringholeshangrila@yahoo.com or dollyanne@truefaithband.com)

ANGELA Calina

Cebuano . . .

From page A30

She is set to enroll in a course on film and TV production at the International Academy of Film and Television (IAFTV), run by Americans (the same people behind Bigfoot Soundworks), on Mactan Island. IAFTV's other campuses are in Hollywood and Hong Kong. The Mactan facility will cover 8,200 square meters.

For this new endeavor, Calina is taking a full year's leave from work. She explains why: "I do everything with passion."

SHANG CINEPLEX

1 KINGDOM OF HEAVEN
MTRCB: PG-13
12:55, 4:00, 7:05, 10:10

2 THE INTERPRETER
MTRCB: PG-13
11:20, 2:00, 4:40, 7:20, 10:00

3 AMITYVILLE HORROR
Subject to MTRCB Rating
12:20, 2:35, 4:50, 7:05, 9:20

4 IN GOOD COMPANY
Subject to MTRCB Rating
11:55, 2:15, 4:35, 6:55, 9:15

PREMIERE THEATRE HEAD IN THE CLOUDS
MTRCB: R-13

Movies and schedules are subject to change without prior notice

Get Your Star Wars Movie Tickets Now!

Be one of the first to catch the simultaneous U.S. screening of Star Wars: Episode III Revenge of the Sith at the Shang Cineplex on May 18! Premiere screening starts at 10:00pm.

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1 IN GOOD COMPANY
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2 KINGDOM OF HEAVEN
11:00, 2:00, 5:00
8:00, 11:00
PG-13

3 HEAD IN THE CLOUDS
PLEASE CALL FOR SCREENING TIME
PG-13

4 AMITYVILLE HORROR
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GUESS WHO PG13 12:00,2:20,4:40,7:00,9:20	IN GOOD COMPANY PG13 12:50,3:10,5:30,7:50,10:10	THE INTERPRETER PG13 11:45,2:15,4:45,7:15,9:45
HEAD IN THE CLOUDS R13	AMITYVILLE HORROR 1:25,3:35,5:45,7:55,10:05	KINGDOM OF HEAVEN PG13 1:20,4:20,7:20,10:20

star group of cinemas movie guide
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3 Tagos sa Laman
4 Kingdom of Heaven
5 XXX 2

METROPOLIS ALABANG star
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1 Amityville
2 Tagos sa Laman
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2. KINGDOM OF HEAVEN
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10:30 LFS / 11:00 LMF / 1:25 END
833-8876

sm megamall cinema 1
THE INTERPRETER
12:30 FS / 1:10 MF / 4:00 / 6:50
9:00 LFS / 9:40 LMF / 11:50 END
633-1901

sm cebu cinema
CINEMA 1: THE INTERPRETER
11:20 FS / 11:30 MF / 2:00 / 4:30 / 7:00
9:07 LFS / 9:30 LMF / 11:40 END
CINEMA 3: GUESS WHO?
11:50 FS / 12:00 MF / 1:54 / 3:48 / 5:42 / 7:36
9:20 LFS/9:30 LMF / 11:55 END
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METRO MANILA

sm megamall
1 THE INTERPRETER
2 SIX
3 KINGDOM OF HEAVEN
4 IN GOOD COMPANY
5 xXx 2: THE NEXT LEVEL
6 ANG LAGUSAN
7 RESERVED
8 RESERVED
9 RESERVED
10 THE AMITYVILLE HORROR
11 CAN THIS BE LOVE
12 IN GOOD COMPANY

sm city fairview
1 THE INTERPRETER
2 SAMARA: RING 2
3 SAHARA
4 KINGDOM OF HEAVEN
5 CAN THIS BE LOVE
6 xXx 2: THE NEXT LEVEL
7 THE AMITYVILLE HORROR
8 THE PACIFIER
9 SIX
10 RING OF THE NIBELUNGS
11 THE WEDDING DATE
12 GUESS WHO

sm city north edsa
1 KINGDOM OF HEAVEN
2 HEAD IN THE CLOUDS
3 RESERVED
4 CAN THIS BE LOVE
5 ARE WE THERE YET?
6 xXx 2: THE NEXT LEVEL
7 IN GOOD COMPANY
8 THE AMITYVILLE HORROR

sm city sta. mesa
1 KINGDOM OF HEAVEN
2 POOH HEFFALUMP MOVIE
3 THE AMITYVILLE HORROR
4 RESERVED
5 RESERVED
6 SIX
7 CAN THIS BE LOVE
8 xXx 2: THE NEXT LEVEL
9 HEAD IN THE CLOUDS
10 IN GOOG COMPANY

sm city southmall
1 RESERVED
2 RESERVED
3 THE AMITYVILLE HORROR
4 IN GOOD COMPANY
5 GUESS WHO
6 RING OF THE NIBELUNGS
7 KINGDOM OF HEAVEN
8 CAN THIS BE LOVE
9 SIX
10 xXx 2: THE NEXT LEVEL

sm city manila
1 THE AMIYTVILLE HORROR
2 SIX
3 IN GOOD COMPANY
4 KINGDOM OF HEAVEN
5 THE WEDDING DATE
6 xXx 2: THE NEXT LEVEL
7 GUESS WHO
8 THE INTERPRETER
9 CAN THIS BE LOVE
10 SAHARA
11 RING OF THE NIBELUNGS
12 SAMARA: RING 2

sm cinema tutuban
1 RESERVED
2 RESERVED
3 RESERVED
4 RESERVED

sm supercenter sucat
1 THE AMITYVILLE HORROR
2 CAN THIS BE LOVE
3 KINGDOM OF HEAVEN
4 IN GOOD COMPANY

sm city bicutan
1 KINGDOM OF HEAVEN
2 IN GOOD COMPANY
3 THE AMITYVILLE HORROR
4 CAN THIS BE LOVE

LUZON

sm city pampanga
1 KINGDOM OF HEAVEN
2 CAN THIS BE LOVE
3 xXx 2: THE NEXT LEVEL
4 SAHARA
5 RING OF THE NIBELUNGS
6 CAN THIS BE LOVE

sm city baguio
1 THE INTERPRETER
2 KINGDOM OF HEAVEN
3 THE WEDDING DATE
4 SAHARA

sm city batangas
1 THE PACIFIER
2 CAN THIS BE LOVE
3 KINGDOM OF HEAVEN
4 SAHARA

sm city marilao
1 SAHARA
2 GUESS WHO
3 KINGDOM OF HEAVEN
4 RING OF THE NIBELUNGS

sm city bacoor
1 SAMARA: RING 2
2 SIX
3 KINGDOM OF HEAVEN
4 THE AMITYVILLE HORROR
5 xXx 2: THE NEXT LEVEL
6 CAN THIS BE LOVE
7 RING OF THE NIBELUNGS
8 SAHARA

sm city dasmariñas
1 RING OF THE NIBELUNGS
2 CAN THIS BE LOVE
3 KINGDOM OF HEAVEN
4 SAHARA

sm city lucena
1 SAHARA
2 THE PACIFIER
3 CAN THIS BE LOVE
4 KINGDOM OF HEAVEN

VISAYAS AND MINDANAO

sm city cebu
1 THE INTERPRETER
2 RESERVED
3 KINGDOM OF HEAVEN
4 GUESS WHO
5 THE WEDDING DATE
6 CURSED
7 CAN THIS BE LOVE
8 ONG BAK: THE THAI WARRIOR

sm city iloilo
1 THE PACIFIER
2 RESERVED
3 CAN THIS BE LOVE
4 SAHARA
5 KINGDOM OF HEAVEN
6 GUESS WHO
7 RESERVED
8 THE WEDDING DATE

sm city davao
1 KINGDOM OF HEAVEN
2 SHAOLIN vs EVIL DEAD
3 CAN THIS BE LOVE
4 GUESS WHO
5 THE INTERPRETER
6 FINDING NEVERLAND

sm city cagayan de oro
1 SAHARA
2 CAN THIS BE LOVE
3 THE WEDDING DATE
4 KINGDOM OF HEAVEN

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GALLERIA
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1 KINGDOM OF HEAVEN • THX
2 THE INTERPRETER
3 AMITYVILLE HORROR
4 XXX 2
5 HEAD IN THE CLOUDS
6 IN GOOD COMPANY
7 SIX
8 THE PACIFIER
9 THE WEDDING DATE
10 GUESS WHO?

ERMITA
536-7809 to 12

1 KINGDOM OF HEAVEN
2 XXX 2
3 SIX
4 THE WEDDING DATE
5 IN GOOD COMPANY
6 AMITYVILLE HORROR
7 HEAD IN THE CLOUDS

METRO EAST
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1 XXX 2
2 SIX
3 THE WEDDING DATE
4 THE INTERPRETER
5 KINGDOM OF HEAVEN
6 ASTERIX AND OBELIX
7 GUESS WHO?
8 AMITYVILLE HORROR

NOVALICHES
935-3229/31

1 KINGDOM OF HEAVEN
2 XXX 2
3 GUESS WHO?
4 AMITYVILLE HORROR
5 KINGDOM OF HEAVEN
6 RESERVE
7 RESERVE
8 RESERVE

PIONEER
687-5378

1 KINGDOM OF HEAVEN
2 AMITYVILLE HORROR
3 XXX 2
4 IN GOOD COMPANY

CITISQUARE MALABON
288-2575

1 KINGDOM OF HEAVEN
2 SPONGEBOB SQUAREPANTS
3 XXX 2
4 THE JACKET

CAINTA
240-4661

1 KINGDOM OF HEAVEN
2 XXX 2
3 SAHARA
4 RING OF THE NIBELUNGS

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1 KINGDOM OF HEAVEN
2 XXX 2
3 THE WEDDING DATE
4 BOSO
5 THE JACKET

LIPA
(043) 757-3664
(043) 312-5870

1 KINGDOM OF HEAVEN
2 OK KA PARE KO
3 THE JACKET
4 SAHARA
5 THE PACIFIER

DASMARIÑAS
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(046) 416-4332

1 KINGDOM OF HEAVEN
2 CURSED
3 RING OF THE NIBELUNGS
4 BOSO
5 XXX 2

ANGELES
(045) 892-2348

1 KINGDOM OF HEAVEN
2 THE WEDDING DATE
3 THE JACKET
4 GUESS WHO?

IMUS
(046) 875-3838
(046) 471-8188

1 KINGDOM OF HEAVEN
2 TAGOS SA LAMAN
3 RING OF THE NIBELUNGS
4 XXX 2
5 LOVE ME IF YOU DARE
6 SIX

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(045) 961-6270

1 ASTERIX AND OBELIX
2 RING OF THE NIBELUNGS
3 SAHARA
4 XXX 2
5 KINGDOM OF HEAVEN
6 GUESS WHO?

BACOLOD
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(034) 441-0459

1 KINGDOM OF HEAVEN
2 XXX 2
3 THE WEDDING DATE
4 SAHARA
5 SPONGEBOB SQUAREPANTS
6 ALONE IN THE DARK

ILOILO
(032) 336 8070

1 KINGDOM OF HEAVEN
2 XXX 2
3 PARAISO
4 GUESS WHO?
5 SAHARA
6 THE WEDDING DATE

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G1 GLORIETTA 1	1 THE AMITYVILLE HORROR	2 SA AKING PAGKAKAGISING MULA SA KAMULATAN	3 KINGDOM OF HEAVEN	4 CAN THIS BE LOVE			
G4 GLORIETTA 4	1 IN GOOD COMPANY	2 HEAD IN THE CLOUDS	3 THX KINGDOM OF HEAVEN GUARANTEED SEATS	4 SHATTERED GLASS	5 XXX 2	6 THE AMITYVILLE HORROR	7 GUESS WHO
GB1 GREENBELT 1	1 IN GOOD COMPANY	2 KINGDOM OF HEAVEN					
GB3 GREENBELT 3	1 THX THE AMITYVILLE HORROR GUARANTEED SEATS	2 THX KINGDOM OF HEAVEN GUARANTEED SEATS	3 THE INTERPRETER GUARANTEED SEATS	4 HEAD IN THE CLOUDS GUARANTEED SEATS	5 IN GOOD COMPANY GUARANTEED SEATS		
ATC ALABANG TOWN CENTER	1 THX KINGDOM OF HEAVEN	2 THE AMITYVILLE HORROR	3 IN GOOD COMPANY	4 GUESS WHO	5 HEAD IN THE CLOUDS		
ACC AYALA CENTER CEBU	1 KINGDOM OF HEAVEN	2 GUESS WHO	3 THE INTERPRETER	4 THE CURSED			

7 DAYS TO GO

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Directed by: Freddie Santos

Reserved seats on a first-come, first-serve basis for shoppers who present P300 worth of receipts on May 13.

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Time to Harvest the Best Deals
May 13 10am-9pm
May 14 10am-12mn
May 15 10am-9pm

Gary Estrada cast in Malaysian telenovela

DOLLYWOOD

Dolly Ann Carvajal

GUESS who this matinee idol and TV host are! He used to be the boyfriend of a young actress while she's the former mistress of a budding host/actor. They are keeping their relationship hush-hush for now to avoid public scrutiny. But it seems they are subject to an even more "cruel test " in their private lives. Heard that when the heartthrob brought Ms. TV host home to meet the family, his folks did not approve of her because she wasn't fluent in English. Would love, being the universal language, save their relationship?

Gary in Malaysian series

Gary Estrada texted me from Malaysia to share his excitement "I'm part of the cast of a Filipino Malaysian *telenovela*. Half of it will be shot here and the other half back there in the Philippines. I'm working with some big names here. My leading lady is a new actress but she's a very popular model. I love my role! The story is something like 'Lovers in Paris.'" After *chinovelas* Korean *telenovelas* now comes a Malaysian version! The world is truly getting smaller and more "senti!" All together now, 1-2-3 ….. "AsiAHHHHHH!!"

Update on Sharon tour

And all the way from the United States, make-up guru **Fanny Serrano** texted this bit of good news to me: "The 1st show of **Sharon Cuneta** last May 8 at Moran Performing Arts Theater in Jacksonville Florida was a tremendous success. Her fans from Georgia, New York, South Carolina etc… came to see the show. They were all so happy to see the Megastar after her seven years of absence from the concert scene. *Wala silang pakialam kahit tumaba si* Mega. *Lalong gumanda ang boses ni* Mega *kasi matagal siyang nakapahinga*. Her chemistry with **Ogie Alcasid** and **Robert Seña** is perfect. Very entertaining *ang* show! She signed autographs and posed for pics with her fans after the show. We are taking a break now in Orlando. We will visit Disneyworld. Then we are flying to Chicago for her second show (May 14) at Rosemont Theater. We heard that tickets are almost sold out!"

Our Megastar does it again! Her charisma has not diminished through the years. Pinoys back here go gaga over "American Idol." Now it's America's turn to get a taste of our mega idol once again.

'Saranghe'

I could not help but remember my mom's signature line "Saranghamneda, Bo" (Korean for I love you, Bo) when **Sandara Park** and **Hero Angeles** exchanged "Saranghe's" (shorter form of Saranghamneda) in "Can This Be love?" It's a giddily charming film. Sandara may still lack depth in the acting department but she's refreshingly natural. The Korean charmer is so endearing especially in her scenes where she begs Hero to speak Tagalog/English slowly so she will be able to catch up. Hero's not bad himself, except for his makeup, which was thicker than Sandara's. And his lip gloss was too shiny. Hero definitely needs a heroic make-up rescue!

Approval from above

Angel Locsin and **Oyo Boy Sotto** were spotted at 6 Underground. But the lovey-dovey couple are no longer keeping their romance underground. They watched the gig of Mongols and Rivermaya there. Oyo's sister **Danica** was also around for her boyfriend, **Mark**, drummer of Rivermaya. Seems that "Darna's" ex (the late **Mico Sotto**) is giving her a dose of his "supernatural powers" from up above to make her end up with his cousin for keeps. Love moves in mysterious ways, indeed!

GARY Estrada

Retrenchment rumors

Could it be true that ABS-CBN Foundation (the one producing educational shows like "Sineskwela") is now conducting three waves of retrenchment? Is it sink or swim for the hapless employees?

Jeturian's latest

After the critically acclaimed sex-comedies like "Bridal Shower" and "Liberated," Seiko Films sends the summer heat soaring with "Bikini Open," the latest from director **Jeffrey Jeturian**.

The film, which follows the fates and fortunes of participants in a bikini contest, is done in what its director calls "mockumentary" (fake documentary) format. Direk Jeffrey says that when he sat down with **Robbie Tan** to discuss his next project for Seiko Films, all he knew was that he wanted it to be as fun as "Bridal Shower." But in typical Jeturian fashion, he wanted a comedy that combined humor with wit—in short, he wanted to make a film that would not insult the intelligence of moviegoers.

"I thought of doing a movie on bikini contests that are held in comedy bars, because when you think about it, it's just another form of exploitation where people will use their bodies to achieve their ends," says Jeturian.

Scriptwriter **Cris Martinez** added a new dimension to the original idea when he proposed that they put in a public affairs host sent to cover the event. The role is played by multi-awarded actress **Cherry Pie Picache**.

GARY/ A27

Garcia: Actors and journalists should be armed

ILOILO City—"I'm in favor of arming members of media so they can defend themselves. You should arm yourselves," veteran action star Eddie Garcia told local journalists recently.

Garcia, 76, was in town to promote a local brandy and join the First Gentleman's Cup 3-Gun Match.

The actor has been a shooting enthusiast since the 1960s. He said the sport also teaches discipline.

"Every Filipino should be,[able to] defend himself and be ready to help defend the country [in case of] foreign aggression," he said.

Legitimate gun owners are responsible individuals, he pointed out: "Nobody in his right mind would use his licensed firearm to commit a crime."

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Three lives. One destiny.
HEAD in the CLOUDS

France's favorite funny heroes in live-action movie!
Asterix & Obelix VERSUS CAESAR
In this film, Caesar gives Detritus an ultimatum: find a way to conquer the Gauls or he'll find his way inside the stomach of the lions. Detritus comes up with a plan to kidnap Getafix the Druid, creator of the magic potion which enables the Gauls to be temporarily invincible. Meanwhile, the Romans' tax collection chest winds up in the village and con-man Prolix is out to trick them all. Obelix is in love with Panacea who loves someone else. A new magic potion is developed with "double" the punch. The Roman centurion X'mas Bonus once again reluctantly sends his soldiers to do battle with the Gauls (he knows he's bound to lose, anyway). Betrayals, battles, and funny escapades abound! And where is Asterix in all this? You'll just have to watch how everyone's favorite Gaul will save the day!
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One year later, the new house owners, George and Kathy Lutz and their children moved into the house thinking it would be their dream home.

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HE'S RICH, YOUNG AND HANDSOME. HE'S IN LOVE WITH YOU AND HE'S YOUR DAD'S BOSS.
In Good Company

OPENS MAY 18!
From the team that created box-office and critical-hit BRIDAL SHOWER, comes a fresh and bitingly funny satirical take on Filipino beauty contests.
CHERRY PIE PICACHE DIANA ZUBIRI FRANCINE PRIETO NINA RICCI ALAGAO
RAFAEL ROSELL ALFRED VARGAS J.E. SISON introducing ROXY RAMIREZ DARLING LAVINA
guests RICKY DAVAO MICHAEL DE MESA RODEL VELAYO TIM YAP & MARISSA DELGADO

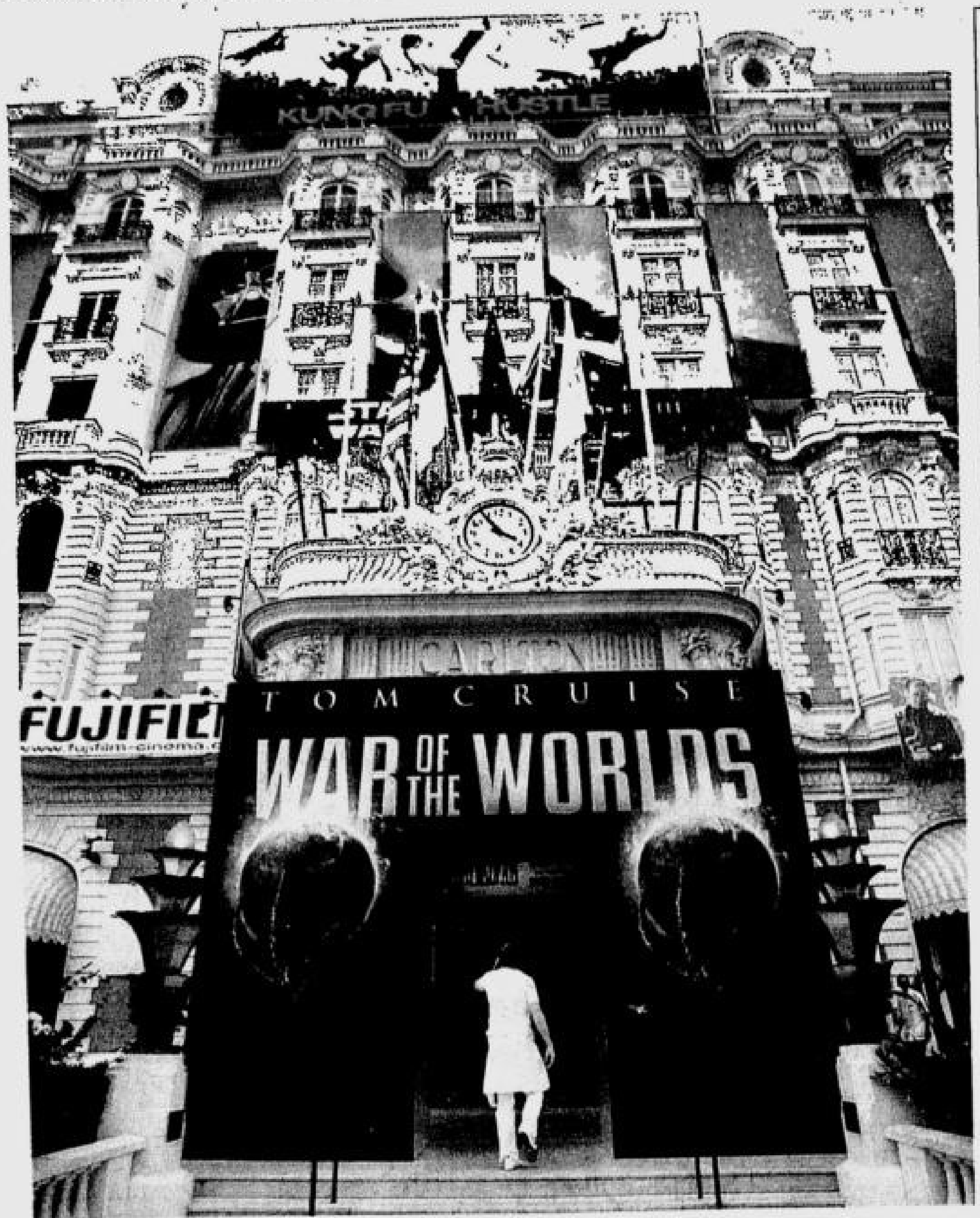
Bikini open
SEIKO Films presentation Directed by JEFFREY JETURIAN

ENTERTAINMENT

E-mail: pr_entertainment@inquirer.com.ph

Editor Emmie G. Velarde

Text us your feedback: inquirer ent name/age/city/message to 2207 (Globe) or 283 (Smart)



THE CARLTON Palace in Cannes two days before the opening of the international film festival's 58th edition. "War of the Worlds" will be screened here. AFP

Heady H'wood glam invades Cannes anew

CANNES, France—The annual extravaganza of stars, schmoozing and celluloid that is the Cannes film festival is set to start this week after last-minute preparations that have transformed this French Riviera resort.

Up and down the 2-kilometer stretch of beach known as La Croisette, workers on Monday were putting up huge posters of films—most of them Hollywood blockbusters to be released in the months following the festival—and decking out white tents to host the parties that the 12-day event is famed for.

At the "Palais"—a three-story concrete complex at one end of the beach that serves as the heart of the festival—a huge billboard announced the event to tourists walking by in T-shirts and shorts, but the red carpet to be trodden on by the film world's great and good starting Wednesday was not yet laid.

This year is expected to be a heady one for Hollywood glamour.

Two US films headed for blockbuster worldwide success—"Sin City," an ultra-violent movie starring Bruce Willis and Mickey Rourke, and "Star Wars III: The Revenge of the Sith"—will appear in the official selection, meaning tuxedo-clad appearances by their cast.

In addition, US studios are hyping upcoming summer releases, notably the much anticipated "War of the Worlds" starring Tom Cruise and directed by Steven Spielberg.

"I think we're going to see a good amount of stars at Cannes this year," said Joey Monteiro, an executive with the US distribution company Lions Gate.

The Hollywood hijack of Cannes' showcase status is encouraged by the organizers, who work every year to bring a star cachet to the event.

But the core of the festival remains the official competition: a select club of just 21 films this year vying for the Palme d'Or, awarded last year to Michael Moore's anti-Bush documentary "Fahrenheit 9/11."

The stars attract in their footsteps some 250,000 onlookers and fans and 35,000 film industry types—meaning hotels and restaurants are in for their busiest 12 days of the year.

AFP

An Ella May and RJ weekend

By Pocholo Concepcion
Contributor

SHOW TIME

TWO CONCERTS on the same evening, this Saturday—one for an intimate audience, the other set up for a large outdoor crowd—are offering enthusiasts a way to temporarily beat the sweltering heat.

First, the small gig featuring a talented female soul singer who preceded the current crop of local R&B acts. Before Kyla and Nina, there was Ella May Saison of the famous musician clan that includes her father Eli and brother Elmir, both respected keyboard artists in the jazz circuit.

Four years ago, Ella May packed her bags and went to the United States to pursue her dream of performing before an international crowd. She did land some club gigs, although she admitted before a group of entertainment writers recently that it would take some time before she could consider herself a real success overseas.

Between those twice weekly gigs, Ella May did accounting work in a Los Angeles music store, and was an assistant cook in a specialty restaurant inside the UCLA campus. The kitchen stint was hard but she liked it, she said, since cooking was among her other passions.

In the US, she learned how to survive and become physically and emotionally stable.

Her latest homecoming was supposed to be a six-month vacation. But ABS-CBN's Star Records signed her to an album deal. The album is due out in July, but a three-song sampler is now available. Among the contents, all tear-jerky ballads, is a cover of "Now That You're Gone," written and originally recorded by Sharon Cuneta.

At the press briefing to promote her concert at the Music Musuem, a point was raised regarding Ella May's rather elitist image: Noting the sampler's pop approach, was she now being packaged to reach out to the bigger *masa* crowd?

Yes indeed, Ella May answered, adding that this should not be taken as a "sellout" on her part, but more of a "compromise." The rest of the album is a balance of original material and cover versions.

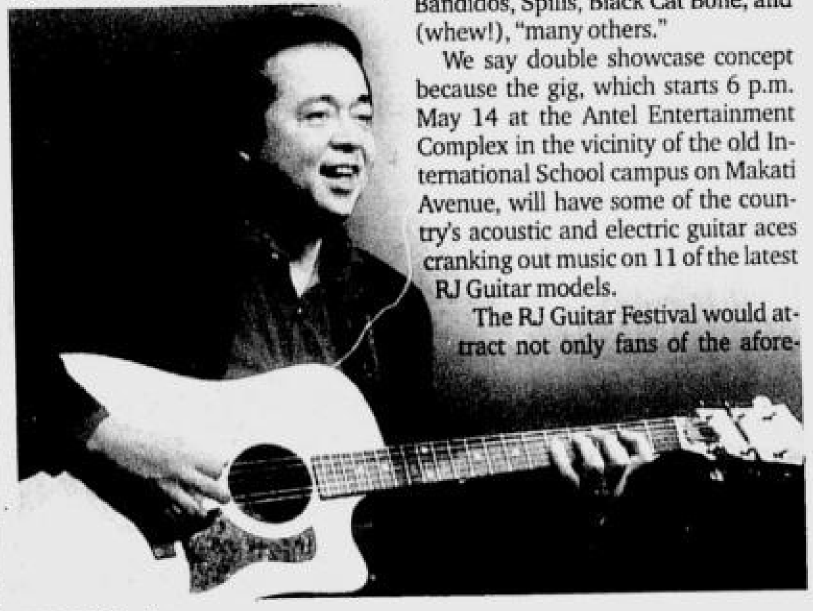
Ella May gamely sang for the press, starting with two of her old hits—"If the Feeling Is Gone" and "Till My Heartaches End."

When she sang Oleta Adams' "Get Here," we had this very disturbing thought: The girl's got soul and could very well impress an international audience. But in the light of hard realities attendant to trying to make a name in the highly competitive Stateside scene, it might be more practical for her to stay home awhile and allow her gifts to get the notice that it deserves.

The big gig

Now, the big gig, a double showcase concept called "RJ Guitar Festival: The Concert" that headlines a mixture of veteran and new acts. These include Noel Cabangon, Nyoy Volante, Paolo Santos, Florante, Pido, Rene Garcia, Jun Lopito, Joey Puyat, the Dawn, Rage, Edgar Opida, Albert Montinola, Orange and Lemons, Hale, Bloomfield Band, Affinity, Juana, Sushi Box, Arglas, Valet Parking, Hoodwink, Angkan, 99 Band, Quatro Bandidos, Spills, Black Cat Bone, and (whew!), "many others."

We say double showcase concept because the gig, which starts 6 p.m. May 14 at the Antel Entertainment Complex in the vicinity of the old International School campus on Makati Avenue, will have some of the country's acoustic and electric guitar aces cranking out music on 11 of the latest RJ Guitar models.



RAMON Jacinto

ELLA May Sayson

The RJ Guitar Festival would attract not only fans of the aforementioned musicians, but also a steadily growing segment of the music scene—students seriously learning the art and craft of playing guitar whether informally or via the RJ Academy of Music.

RJ of course stands for Ramon Jacinto and he's producing the marathon concert.

Looking dapper and ageless before a group of broadcast and print journalists at his soon to open "health food" restaurant and music club on Jupiter Street, Makati, Jacinto explained the merits of his gig:

"*Ang Pilipino at gitara, lagi nang magkasama noon pa*…Think of the *harana*…all the way through the '50s, '60s and '70s. Sometime in the '80s, *nawala ang gitara* due to the popularity of synthesizers. But now it's back to its old glory. In this concert, I want people to be reminded how much we love the guitar sound, which in this case will be performed by the best musicians from past and present eras."

If in the past we have criticized Jacinto for tripping too much on nostalgia, this time we'd like to sit back and enjoy what seems to be a sincere effort on his part to inspire others to take up the guitar, just like he did.

For Jacinto, what began as a hobby in the early '60s led to his forming a band (RJ & the Riots), founding a radio station (dzRJ in Manila which became a broadcasting network) and, upon returning from martial law exile, setting up a club chain (Bistro RJ).

At the press gathering, we had a great time watching a preview of the concert: Jacinto jamming with Cabangon, the Dawn's Francis Reyes, Tonet Lipana, Florante, and two unheard-of names bound to catch fire in the near future by virtue of sheer talent and stage charm: Ateneo student Migs Escueta and former advertising copywriter Dawn Bande.

Proudly Cebuano

By Bayani San Diego Jr.

CEBU has produced some of the best singers in the country, including Pilita Corrales, Vernie Varga, Vina Morales and Sheryn Regis.

But the island-province is also rich in broadcast talents, whether for plain talk or news reporting.

"In Cebu, you can't avoid multi-tasking," explained Angela Calina, host of "Chikahay TA!"—Cebu's CMMA- and Golden Dove-winning Sunday morning gabfest. "We have to know how to host, sing, dance, even write our own spiels. Everything I now know, I learned in ABS-CBN Cebu."

The training led to stints in ABS-CBN Manila—first as co-host of Boy Abunda and JC Gonzalez on "ETC," then as segment host in "Magandang Umaga Bayan," ANC weather anchor and, later, as host of the entrepreneurial show "Kumikitang Kabuhayan."

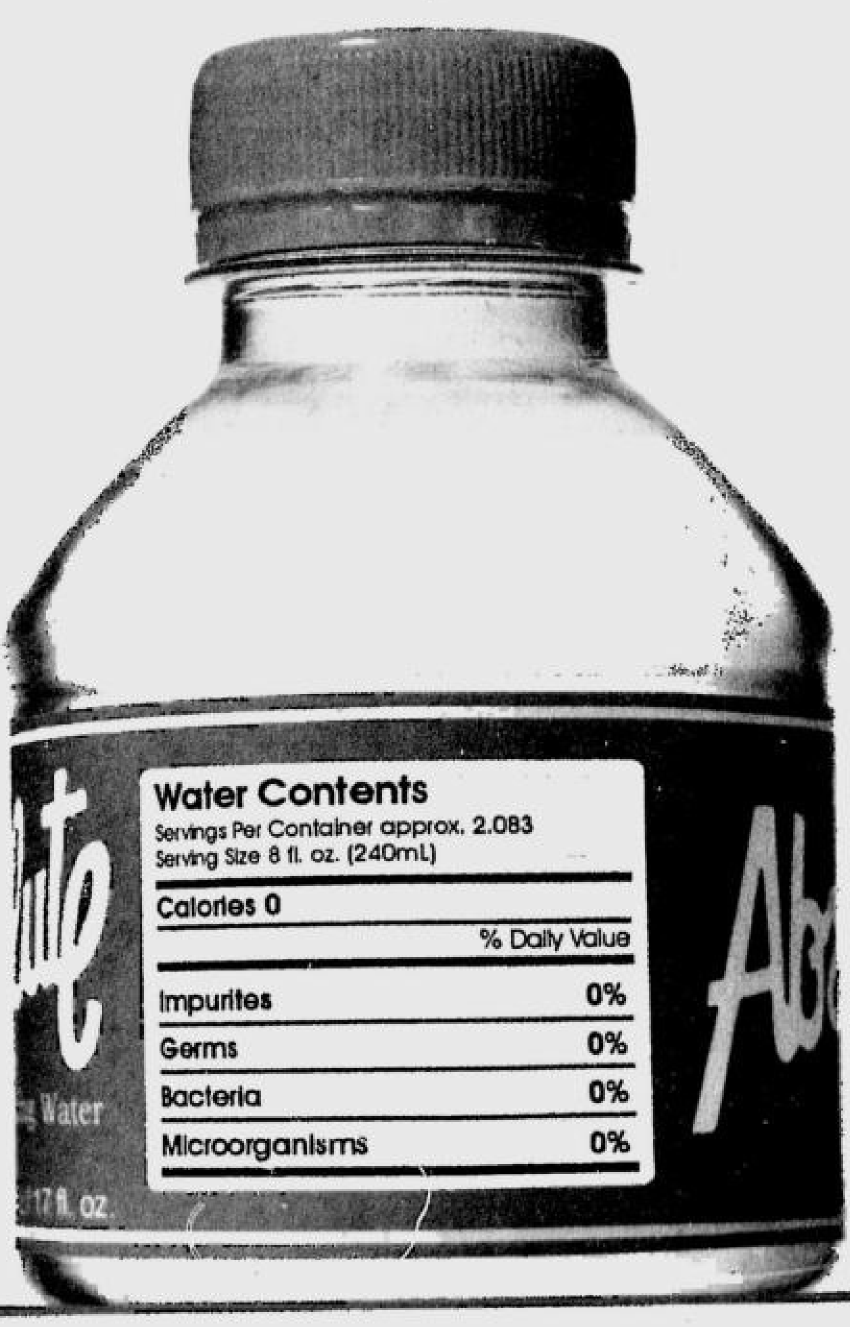
Advocacy

This last show she considers her advocacy. "I believe that entrepreneurship is the solution to the country's unemployment problem."

On top of her broadcasting chores, Calina, who's also a single mom, has found the time to release a CD (under Galaxy Records), front a band (Serendipity), and write an entertainment column for The Freeman Daily.

Calina joined ABS-CBN Cebu at age 17. Now, only 29 years young, she is not about to rest on her laurels and is, in fact, considering bigger prospects.

PROUDLY/A27



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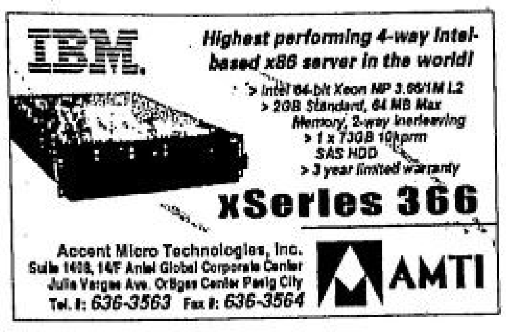
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THURSDAY,
MAY 12, 2005

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

B1

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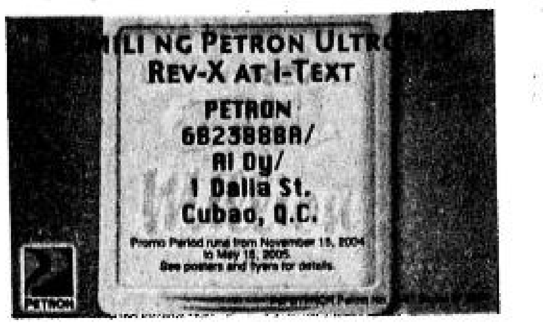
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Finance urges DOJ to act on tax evasion cases

By Michelle V. Remo

THE DEPARTMENT of Finance has called on the Department of Justice to speed up the processing of tax evasion cases against high-profile individuals to raise the credibility of the government's anti-tax evasion drive.

Finance Undersecretary Emmanuel Bonoan said the DOF was hoping the justice department would put on high priority the filing of tax evasion cases with the Court of Tax Appeals (CTA), saying dereliction of duty to pay proper taxes was a major cause of the country's pressing fiscal problem.

The DOF, together with its attached agency the Bureau of Internal Revenue, launched the RATE (run after tax evaders) program last March. Under the program, the two agencies file tax evasion charges against known businesses or celebrities with the DOJ every week to impress upon the public that tax evasion is a serious offense, and that the government is no longer taking it lightly.

Under legal procedures, after a government agency such as the DOF files the cases with the DOJ, the latter will have to get counter-affidavits from the respondents and then file the complaints with the appropriate courts. With regard to tax evasion cases under the RATE program, charges have to be filed with the CTA, the court tasked with hearing tax-related cases involving liabilities of at least P1 million.

The DOJ often takes several months or even more than a year to file charges with the appropriate courts.

"We expressed our concern with the DOJ that we want quicker turnover time for cases to be filed with the CTA. Sixty days is reasonable," he said.

Bonoan said the DOF got a favorable response from the DOJ. He said the DOJ earlier said it would form a team composed of 20 lawyers to deal primarily with the tax evasion cases filed under the RATE program.

Revenue Deputy Commissioner for Prosecution Licerio Evangelista said the DOJ was already looking at filing the first RATE case with the CTA next month. He said the DOJ also had given the commitment to focus on the tax evasion cases filed by the DOF and the BIR.

The BIR said it had recorded improvements in tax collection since the RATE program was launched. It said earlier that last April 15, the revenue agency collected P21.34 billion, the BIR's biggest amount of collection for a single day. The amount was also 43.4 percent higher than the P14.77 billion it collected on April 15, 2004.

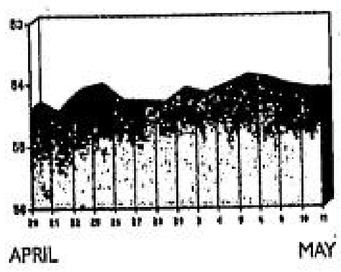
Revenue Commissioner Guillermo Parayno Jr. said the significant improvement in tax collection was likely due to the consciousness on tax obligations as promoted by the RATE program.

FINANCE/ B2

INDICATORS

CURRENCIES

PESO-DOLLAR RATE



₱54.180 = $1
As of 5 p.m., May 11, 2005

¥105.58 = $1
As of 5 p.m., May 11, 2005

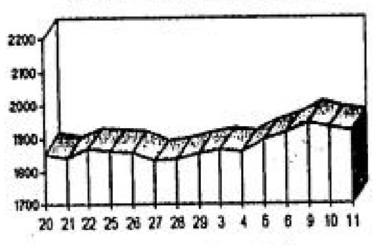
GOLD: $426.00-426.50
per ounce Hong Kong, May 10, 2005

United States	Dollar	0.776880	1.000000	54.2080
Japan	Yen	0.007359	0.009473	0.5135
United Kingdom	Pound	1.462166	1.882100	102.0249
Hong Kong	Dollar	0.099620	0.128231	6.9511
Switzerland	Franc	0.646592	0.832293	45.1169
Canada	Dollar	0.628035	0.808407	43.8221
Singapore	Dollar	0.472325	0.607977	32.9572
Australia	Dollar	0.602373	0.775374	42.0315
Bahrain	Dinar*	2.060799	2.652661	143.7954
Saudi Arabia	Rial	0.207163	0.266660	14.4551
Brunei	Dollar	0.470893	0.606134	32.8573
Indonesia	Rupiah	0.000082	0.000106	0.0057
Thailand	Baht	0.019693	0.025349	1.3741
UAE	Dirham	0.211523	0.272272	14.7593
Euro	Euro	1.000000	1.287200	69.7765
Argentina	Peso	0.269049	0.346320	18.7733
Brazil	Real	0.314107	0.404318	21.9173
Denmark	Kroner	0.134392	0.172989	9.3774
India	Rupee	0.017917	0.023063	1.2502
Malaysia	Ringgit	0.204469	0.263193	14.2672
Mexico	New Peso	0.070364	0.090572	4.9097
New Zealand	Dollar	0.567978	0.731101	39.6315
Norway	Kroner	0.123595	0.159091	8.6240
Pakistan	Rupee	0.013068	0.016821	0.9118
South Africa	Rand	0.126158	0.162390	8.8028
Korea	Won	0.000778	0.001001	0.0543
Sweden	Kroner	0.108586	0.139772	7.5768
Syria	Pound	0.014966	0.019264	1.0443
Taiwan	Nt Dollar	0.024900	0.032051	1.7374
Venezuela	Bolivar	0.000362	0.000466	0.0253

STOCK MARKET

Shares close 0.53% lower

PSE COMPOSITE INDEX



SHARE prices closed 0.53 percent lower, extending losses for a second session yesterday as investors continued to take profits after a lengthy rally, dealers said.

Wall Street's sharp downturn overnight Tuesday and concerns that companies' profitability may be clipped by a higher corporate income tax also kept most investors sidelined, they added.

The Philippine Stock Exchange composite index shed 10.21 points to 1,921.33 after trading between 1,917.14 and 1,931.54. Turnover was 363 million shares worth P988 million.

The broader all-shares index fell 4.83 points to 1,173.54.

Losers beat gainers 46 to 21, with 51 stocks unchanged.

The approval this week of proposed legislation that would raise the corporate income tax by three percentage points to 35 percent and the grant of presidential authority to raise the value-added tax (VAT) by two points next year to 12 percent was a key factor in yesterday's trade, dealers said.

"Profit-taking continued from yesterday. We tracked the performance of Wall Street and other regional markets, plus there are still concerns on VAT," said Nina Tinio of Unicapital Securities Inc.

"Despite what some perceive as flaws, the passage of the VAT bill is a good start. It is a recognition of the need to fix our fiscal house to avoid a possible crisis," said Gomer Tan of Regina Capital Development.

Some analysts have expressed concern that the increase in corporate income tax over three years—before it falls back to 30 percent in 2009—would likely hit corporate profitability and at the same time discourage investors from doing businesses in the Philippines.

Philippine Long Distance Telephone closed unchanged at P1,435. SM Investments at P250 and SM Prime at P7.40 were both flat.

Ayala Land fell 10 centavos to P8 while parent Ayala Corp. gained 10 centavos to P7.30.

San Miguel "A," limited to local investors, was unchanged at P58 while San Miguel "B," available to foreign investors, was also flat at P85.

AFP

Aboitiz consolidates transport businesses

ABOITIZ Transport System Corp. (ATSC) yesterday announced the consolidation of its transportation-related businesses by acquiring five affiliate companies.

ATSC's board approved the issuance of 415.3 million shares or roughly 18 percent of its outstanding shares to stockholders of the five companies.

In a disclosure, ATSC said it would acquire 100 percent of Aboitiz One Inc (A-One), 62.5 percent of Aboitiz Jebsen Bulk Transport Corp. (Abojeb), 62.5 percent of Aboitiz Jebsen Manpower Solutions Inc. (AJMSI), 62.5 percent of Jebsen Maritime Inc. (JMI) and 50 percent of Jebsen Management BVI Ltd. (JMBVI).

The proposed transaction will consolidate the transport and logistics businesses of the Aboitiz Group and is seen to achieve synergy and streamline operations and processes.

The major shareholders of A-One, Abojeb, AJMSI, JMI and JMBVI are private holding firm Aboitiz & Co. Inc. and some of its affiliates.

The balance of the shares in these companies are held mainly by individual Filipino investors.

The Philippine Stock Exchange has suspended trading of ATSC shares starting yesterday until the company has disclosed the terms and conditions of the deal.

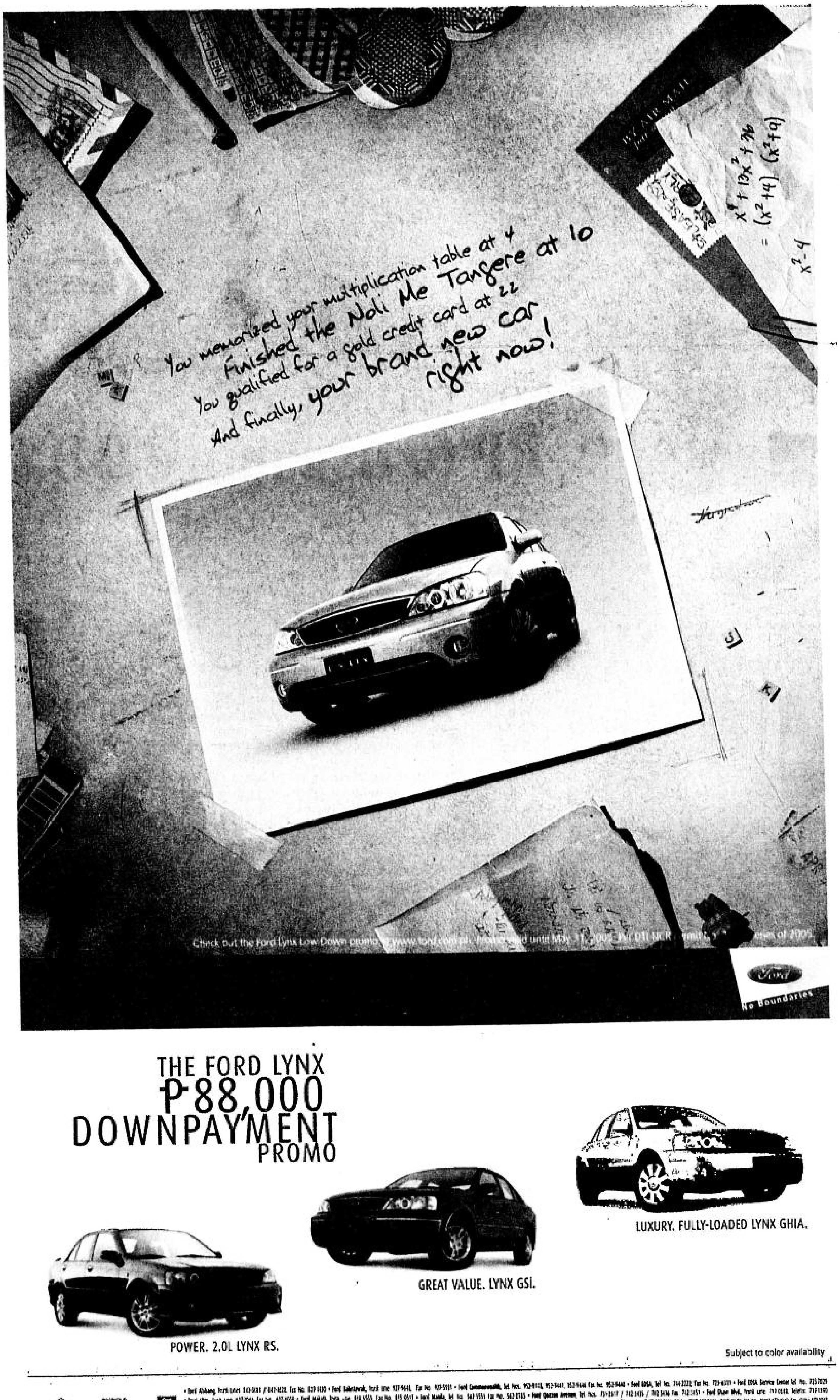
PCI Capital has been engaged to advise the company on the proposed acquisition. *Elizabeth L. Sanchez*

INTEREST RATES

May 10, 2005
MART 1 Rates

Benchmark Interest Rates	MART1 May 11, 2005 (%)	MART1 May 10, 2005 (%)
1 Month	6.3304	6.4217
3 Months	6.4625	6.5596
6 Months	7.4625	7.4875
1 Year	8.4214	8.4854
2 Years	9.4217	9.4283
3 Years	10.4017	10.4433
4 Years	10.9143	11.0417
5 Years	11.2875	11.3839
7 Years	11.5917	11.6417
10 Years	12.04	12.1167
20 Years	12.4633	12.4767
25 Years	12.6967	12.7233

SOURCE : MART/BLOOMBERG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Finished the Noli Me Tangere at 10
You qualified for a gold credit card at 22
And finally, your brand new car right now!
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Roles of the game

BREAKTIME

Conrado R. Banal III

IN THIS country, when you enter into a contract with the government, there is always a chance you will end up ... well, homeless.

Such is the misfortune that befell several companies that entered into contracts with the government in the special economic zones in Camp John Hay, Clark and Poro Point. They are about to lose their...

Just recently, the Supreme Court ruled to take away the tax incentives that the government gave to investors in three special economic zones.

The grant of such incentives, according to the Supreme Court, was—what else?—unconstitutional.

* * *

ACTUALLY, the Supreme Court ruled in a case involving only the Camp John Hay special economic zone, and the investors in the special zones in Poro Point and Clark got hit in the legal crossfire.

More than 10 years ago, a little known environmental NGO sued the BCDA, or the Bases Conversion Development Authority, to stop its plan to develop the former US military base in Baguio City.

The BCDA wanted to lease the property to the highest bidder. While the case was pending, the BCDA went ahead to hold the bidding, assuring the bidders that the project would enjoy tax incentives.

The winner in the bidding happened to be the Fil-Estate group, which formed the CJH Development Corp. for the project.

Fil-Estate is the same company that media loves to blame for the troubles of the College Assurance Plan.

Now, part of the BCDA package of come-ons to the bidders was the tax exemption.

The tax holiday was even embodied in Presidential Proclamation No. 420, issued by the government during the administration of Kuya Eddie.

To attract investors—both foreign and local—Kuya Eddie created special economic zones with duty and tax exemptio privileges. As expected, the investors came in droves.

Surely, none of them expected the Supreme Court's reversal of the presidential proclamation, in that case between an obscure NGO and BCDA, over the Camp John Hay project.

Unfortunately for the investors in Clark and Poro Point, the very same proclamation that the Supreme Court nullified, contained the tax incentives.

What happens to them now? The rules of the game already changed. Not only that. The rules changed right in the middle of the game. Only in the Philippines.

Any normal person should think that all bets were off. Not in this cute administration.

* * *

AS A result of the Supreme Court ruling, the CJH Development stands to pay something like P3 billion in back taxes, and it is staring at another P2 billion in future taxes.

Again, those were not part of the deal. That's why the investors wanted a guarantee from the BCDA that it would continue to enjoy the tax privileges, which the BCDA precisely used as a come-on in the bidding.

No way! The BCDA told the investor. Based on news report, the BCDA even demanded that CJH Development immediately pay P1.2 billion in rentals. Or else...

Well, based on the reports, the BCDA would sue CJH Development!

* * *

WELL, between the P1.2 billion in rentals that CJH supposedly owed BCDA, and the P5 billion in tax obligation that the company must contend with, is actually a lot of money.

Yet, the investors in all those three special economic zones would never be faulted for trusting the government to deliver on its promise of tax privileges.

Think about it: The case against BCDA regarding Camp John Hay was filed before the bidding about seven years ago, and the BCDA never talked about it in the bidding prospectus.

In other words, the BCDA hid it from the bidders. In the government's land privatization game, the BCDA's role was simply to get the money and run.

In effect, the BCDA is telling CJH development and all the prospective buyers of BCDA real property in the future, the government doesn't care about any Supreme Court ruling. You just have to pay up, that's all. That's rather nice of the BCDA.

* * *

TO BEGIN with, the Camp John Hay project was a comedy of errors from the beginning. Let me give you a brief history:

In October 1996, CJH Development gave BCDA some P250 million upon signing of the lease agreement. Again, that was an advance payment! Nothing was happening yet.

After a year, while nothing was still happening in the project, simply because the BCDA could not deliver its part of the deal, CJH Development gave BCDA another P425 million.

That was despite the BCDA's failure to secure the so-called environmental clearance certificate from the DENR, which was part of the deal, meaning the investor could not start the development. In short, zero earning!

Moreover, BCDA could not deliver some 30 hectares that it promised in the contract.

Okay, after more than a year, the DENR finally issued the ECC, but guess how long it took the BCDA to deliver those 30 hectares? Well, only almost four years.

I mean, how do you do business that way? Simple—you don't!

* * *

CJH Development, for its part, also ran into trouble, and thus it had to ask the BCDA for a restructuring of the rental payments.

Well, with the Asian financial meltdown in 1998, all real estate projects in the country were hard up. The Camp John Hay project was not spared.

Still, according to the CJH Development people, despite the poor business, if only for the restructuring of the rentals, their company gave BCDA another P50 million in cash and P75 million in real property.

Both parties got into a so-called MOA, which was never implemented, because the government was debating at that time whether the COA should review the MOA, which took forever to decide, of course.

Finally, while the MOA was hanging, the BCDA had a change of management, which threw away the MOA without much ado, forcing CJH Development to negotiate with the BCDA for a ... well, another MOA.

Thus, another restructuring MOA was written between the investor and BCDA for the rentals from 1999 to 2002.

CJH Development gave BCDA another P50 million in cash.

Only a few days after the MOA signing, the Oakwood military coup attempt happened. The investor, thus, could not make the project take off, and could not earn from the project to help defray the rentals to BCDA.

Yet, despite everything, the company paid BCDA another P50 million.

What I am saying is that, so far, it has been a one-way street. Toward the BCDA! The investor has spent so much money, hundreds upon hundreds of millions of pesos, pouring investments in the project, paying for the rentals to BCDA, and all for what?

For the BCDA's hiding from CJH Development that ticking Supreme Court time bomb!

CJH Development is asking the BCDA to sit down and, maybe, because the BCDA has failed to fulfill its part of the deal, anyway, it is time to recast the whole project.

But to the BCDA, at least based on the news, this CJH Development is a criminal for refusing to pay the rentals, and so BCDA had no choice but to send the CJH Development people to jail. And that's justice?

PHILIPPINE STOCK EXCHANGE

(As of May 11, 2005)

STOCKS	OPEN	HIGH	LOW	CLOSE	VOLUME
BANKS & FINANCIAL SERVICES					
BANKS					
Asiatrust Dev. Bank, Inc.	3.5	3.9	3.5	3.9	182,000
Banco de Oro Univ. Bank	28	28	28	28	1,004,000
Bank of the Phil. Islands	49.5	50	49.5	50	137,300
China Banking Corp.	800	800	800	800	870
Export and Ind. Bank Inc.	0.67	0.68	0.67	0.68	70,000
Equitable PCI Bank Inc.	46.5	47	46	47	83,000
International Exch. Bank	18.25	18.25	18.25	18.25	79,000
Metropolitan Bank & Trust	33	33	32	32.5	129,500
Philippine National Bank	31.5	31.5	31.5	31.5	3,000
Phil. Savings Bank	33.5	33.5	33.5	33.5	500
Security Bank Corp.	27.5	27.5	27.5	27.5	2,000
Union Bank of the Phil.	28	28	28	28	300
FINANCIAL SERVICES					
ATR Kim Eng Fin. Corp.	1.92	1.92	1.92	1.92	5,000
Filipino Fund Inc.	3.3	3.3	3.3	3.3	13,000
First Metro Invest. Corp.	280	280	275	280	270
PCI Leasing & Fin. Inc.	1.02	1.02	1	1	77,000
Sun Life Financial Inc.	1690	1690	1690	1690	310
COMMERCIAL & INDUSTRIAL					
COMMUNICATION					
ABS-CBN Broadcasting Corp.	14	14	14	14	6,100
Digital Telecom Phils Inc.	1.14	1.14	1.08	1.12	2,743,000
Globe Telecom Inc.	845	845	830	830	15,750
Ipeople Inc.	3.95	3.95	3.9	3.9	30,000
Island Info and Tech Inc.	0.043	0.043	0.042	0.043	2,700,000
ISM Communications Corp.	0.048	0.049	0.048	0.049	2,200,000
Pilipino Tel. Corp.	3.35	3.35	3.3	3.3	1,783,000
Phil. Long Dis Tel Co.	1430	1440	1430	1435	259,630
Ivantage Corp.	0.63	0.63	0.63	0.63	420,000
Philweb Corp.	0.018	0.019	0.018	0.019	18,500,000
POWER, ENERGY & OTHER UTILITIES					
Manila Electric Co. A	16.75	16.75	16.75	16.75	6,500
Manila Electric Co. B	24.25	24.5	24.25	24.25	39,600
Manila Water Co. Inc.	6.1	6.2	6	6.1	1,703,000
Petron Corp.	3.5	3.5	3.35	3.4	2,431,000
Salcon Power Corp.	2.1	2.1	2.1	2.1	30,000
Trans-Asia Oil and Energy	1.14	1.14	1.12	1.12	80,000
TRANSPORTATION SERVICES					
Asian Terminals Inc.	1.8	1.8	1.8	1.8	1,293,000
Int'l Container Term'l Sv	7.6	7.6	7.4	7.4	553,000
Keppel Phils. Marine Inc.	0.5	0.55	0.5	0.55	340,000
Lorenzo Shipping Corp.	1.2	1.2	1.2	1.2	5,339,000
CONSTRUCTION & OTHER RELATED PRODUCTS					
Engineering Equip. Inc.	0.68	0.68	0.66	0.67	2,290,000
Holcim Philippines Inc.	3.4	3.7	3.4	3.55	1,358,000
Republic Cement Corp.	0.85	0.85	0.85	0.85	100,000
Republic Glass Hldg. Corp.	1.7	1.7	1.7	1.7	12,000
FOOD, BEVERAGES & TOBACCO					
Alaska Milk Corp.	3.55	3.55	3.35	3.4	92,000
Ginebra San Miguel Inc.	33.5	34	33.5	34	111,000
Jollibee Foods Corp.	29	29	28.5	28.5	41,600
San Miguel Corp. A	57.5	58	57.5	58	72,600
San Miguel Corp. B	85	85	85	85	16,200
Universal Robina Corp.	12.5	12.75	12.5	12.5	97,400
Vitarich Corp.	0.29	0.29	0.29	0.29	160,000
HOLDING FIRMS					
Atok-Big Wedge Co., Inc.	7.8	7.8	7.8	7.8	1,000
Abacus Con Res & Hdg A	0.008	0.008	0.008	0.008	70,000,000
Abacus Con Res & Hdg B	0.0085	0.009	0.0085	0.0085	47,000,000
Ayala Corp.	7.1	7.3	7.1	7.3	1,830,000
Aboitiz Equity Ventures	4.75	4.95	4.75	4.9	5,212,000
Alliance Global Group Inc.	10	10.5	10	10.5	700
A. Soriano Corp.	2.06	2.06	2.06	2.06	2,023,000
APC Group Inc.	0.3	0.3	0.3	0.3	1,000,000
BHI Holdings Inc.	210	210	210	210	2,890
Benpres Holdings Corp.	1	1.02	1	1	1,992,000
Crown Equities Inc.	0.22	0.23	0.22	0.225	2,060,000
Southeast Asian Cement	0.32	0.34	0.32	0.34	240,000
DMCI Holdings Inc.	2.75	2.75	2.6	2.6	665,000
Ever-Gotesco Resources	0.034	0.035	0.033	0.033	1,000,000
Fil-Hispano Holdings Corp.	8.4	8.4	8.1	8.2	615,000
First Phil Hldgs Corp.	49	49	48.5	48.5	290,000
Forum Pacific Inc.	0.17	0.17	0.17	0.17	420,000
House of Investments Inc.	1.22	1.22	1.22	1.22	20,000
J.G. Summit Holdings Inc.	3.3	3.3	3.3	3.3	16,000
Keppel Holdings	0.71	0.71	0.71	0.71	10,000
Macroasia Corp.	1.86	1.86	1.86	1.86	4,000
Megaworld Corp.	1.4	1.4	1.36	1.38	325,000
Metro Pacific Corp.	0.39	0.4	0.38	0.39	17,230,000
East Asia Power Res. Corp.	0.28	0.28	0.28	0.28	300,000
Roxas Holdings Inc.	0.94	0.94	0.94	0.94	40,000
SM Investments Corp.	249	250	248	250	1,104,630
Uniwide Holdings Inc.	0.19	0.19	0.185	0.185	1,260,000
Wellex Industries Inc.	0.15	0.15	0.14	0.15	1,900,000
Waterfront Phils. Inc.	0.24	0.24	0.24	0.24	1,050,000
MANUFACTURING, DISTRIBUTION & TRADING					
Music Semiconductors Corp.	1.2	1.22	1.2	1.22	29,000
Pryce Corp.	0.24	0.24	0.24	0.24	7,720,000
HOTEL, RECREATION & OTHER SERVICES					
Belle Corp.	1.2	1.2	1.16	1.16	6,684,000
Fairmont Holdings Inc.	0.88	0.92	0.88	0.92	60,000
Leisure & Resorts Corp.	1.48	1.5	1.46	1.46	1,740,000
Premiere Ent. Prod. Inc.	0.33	0.37	0.33	0.37	12,560,000
BONDS, PREFERRED & WARRANTS					
ABS-CBN Hldgs. Corp.(Pdr)	14	14	14	14	292,300
PLDT (10% Pref) Series M	10.5	10.5	10.5	10.5	800
PLDT (10% Pref) Series V	10.5	10.5	10.5	10.5	2,100
PLDT (10% Pref) Series X	10.5	10.5	10.5	10.5	100
PLDT 10% Pref Series Aa	10.5	10.5	10.5	10.5	3,400
OTHERS					
Centro Escolar University	6.7	6.7	6.5	6.5	6,000
PROPERTY					
Ayala Land Inc.	8	8	8	8	2,470,000
Cebu Holdings Inc.	0.98	0.98	0.97	0.97	670,000
C&P Homes Inc.	0.28	0.29	0.28	0.28	3,550,000
Cyber Bay Corp.	0.23	0.23	0.22	0.22	1,700,000
Empire East Land Inc.	0.39	0.4	0.39	0.4	5,960,000
Filinvest Land Inc.	1.6	1.62	1.58	1.62	15,250,000
Kuok Phil. Properties	0.21	0.21	0.21	0.21	40,000
Fil-Estate Land Inc.	0.6	0.6	0.6	0.6	60,000
Robinsons Land Corp.	4.9	5	4.9	5	382,000
Phil Realty and Holdings	0.21	0.21	0.21	0.21	70,000
SM Prime Holdings Inc.	7.4	7.4	7.3	7.4	6,358,000
MINING					
Apex Mining Co. Inc. A	0.75	0.75	0.75	0.75	190,000
Abra Mining & Industrial	0.0085	0.0085	0.0085	0.0085	15,000,000
Atlas Cons. Min & Dev't	4.65	4.65	4.3	4.3	536,000
Benguet Corp. A	9	9	9	9	10,000
Lepanto Cons Mng. Co. A	0.32	0.32	0.32	0.32	960,000
Lepanto Cons. Mng. Co B	0.35	0.35	0.34	0.34	2,300,000
Manila Mining Corp. A	0.016	0.016	0.016	0.016	10,000,000
Manila Mining Corp. B	0.021	0.021	0.021	0.021	35,000,000
Omico Corp.	0.007	0.007	0.007	0.007	20,000,000
Philex Mining Corp. A	0.94	0.94	0.93	0.93	140,000
Philex Mining Corp. B	1.08	1.08	1.04	1.08	998,000
Semirara Mining Corp.	32.5	33	32	32	509,400
United Paragon Mining Co.	0.21	0.25	0.21	0.25	100,000
OIL					
Interport Res. B	0.005	0.005	0.005	0.005	1,000,000
Oriental Pet. & Min. B	0.006	0.006	0.006	0.006	3,000,000
Petroenergy Res. Corp.	2.5	2.5	2.5	2.5	10,000
Sinophil Corp.	0.165	0.165	0.165	0.165	2,690,000
Vulcan Ind'l	0.32	0.33	0.32	0.33	250,000

Atlas eyes IPO to fund mine

By Christine A. Gaylican

TO RAISE the $150 million needed to reopen the Toledo copper mine in Cebu City, Atlas Consolidated Mining and Development Corp. is considering an international public offering of its shares this year.

A high ranking company official yesterday said Atlas has selected Macquarie Bank of Australia as underwriter for the issue, the size of which was yet to be determined.

At the same time, Atlas Consolidated is holding talks with six foreign mining firms for possible investments in the copper mine which has been idle for 10 years.

Atlas plans to restart operations by the end of the year.

The identities of the prospective firms were not disclosed but the official said one was Chinese, another Japanese and two were Korean.

Atlas president Alfredo Ramos said earlier that negotiations were at the preliminary stage, and that all six mining firms wanted to either buy Atlas shares or forge a contract that would allow the company to sell its future copper output.

Atlas' copper project in Cebu was started in 1955 covering some 5,000 hectares.

The project, however, was suspended in 1994 after copper prices in the world market fell.

The Toledo facility is capable of producing 42,000 metric tons of copper daily.

The mine was said to have 873 million tons of good quality copper.

ICTSI Q1 profit soared 66%

PORT operator International Container Terminal Services Inc. (ICTSI) reported that its first-quarter consolidated net income soared 66 percent to P275 million from P166 million in the same period last year, buoyed by higher volumes from Brazil and its flagship port in Manila.

Increased volumes were handled by Tecon Suape S.A. (TSSA), which operates the Suape Container Terminal (SCT) in Pernambuco, Brazil, and the Manila International Container Terminal (MICT).

"The first quarter is traditionally our weakest. These strong results show that we are off to a great start in 2005, and continue to deliver the kind of positive trajectory in profit growth we established last year," Enrique K. Razon Jr., ICTSI chair and chief executive, said.

ICTSI handled consolidated volume of 443,373 twenty-foot equivalent units (TEUs)

ICTSI/B3

COST CUTTING

RP to use more ODA

By Doris C. Dumlao

THE PHILIPPINES plans to tap more official development assistance funds from multilateral and bilateral donors to bring down the cost of foreign borrowings.

In a briefing at Malacañang yesterday, Finance Secretary Cesar Purisima said that for this year, the government planned to use about $900 million worth of ODAs this year, representing 22.5 percent of its $4-billion foreign borrowing requirement.

Last year, the government used up $683 million in ODA.

"In the past seven years, ODA (accounted for) the bulk of our borrowings," Purisima said.

The country's ability to use ODA was impaired during the time of deposed President Joseph Estrada due to the reduction in the budget set aside for counterpart funding given the widening budget deficit.

But with the government back on the right track with its fiscal consolidation program, Purisima said it could borrow cheaper funds through ODA.

"We'll probably continue to increase tapping of these ODAs," he said.

Purisima added that the government would consider other non-traditional ways of raising funds.

He said the Department of Finance had yet to finalize a plan to raise funds through the securitization of remittances from overseas Filipino workers.

He said the government could choose not to borrow from the commercial market if there were cheaper sources available.

The global donor community had asked the Philippines to seize the "narrowing" window of opportunity to fast-track reforms that would solve the budget deficit problem weighing down on the economy.

During the two-day Philippine Development Forum earlier held in Davao, the government in turn agreed to fast-track implementation of key reforms.

Meanwhile, the government's effort to develop the country's capital market was cited as an effective means of means of dealing with fiscal vulnerabilities.

"A strong capital market facilitates the more effective conduct of monetary policy by providing additional market-based tools to fine-tune policy initiatives and maintain price stability supportive of growth requirements," said Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas Officer in Charge Amando Tetangco Jr.

SM Prime profit hit P1.24B

By Elizabeth L. Sanchez

RENTAL revenue from new malls pushed up the net profit of mall developer SM Prime Holdings Inc. to P1.24 billion in the first quarter, up 7 percent from P1.16 billion in the same period last year.

SM Prime said in a disclosure to the Philippine Stock Exchange that gross revenue during the period climbed 7 percent to P2.49 billion from P2.33 billion in the same period last year.

Rental revenues accounted for the bulk of the revenue, rising 11 percent to P2.05 billion from last year's P1.84 billion, due to rentals from two additional SM Supermalls opened last year—SM City Dasmariñas and SM City Batangas.

As a result of newly opened malls, operating expenses also swelled 10 percent.

SM City Dasmariñas and SM City Batangas opened with a gross floor area of 79,792 and 80,350 square meters, respectively.

Both malls have a current average occupancy rate of 90 percent.

SM Prime recently declared a cash dividend equivalent to 50 percent of its 2004 earnings, amounting to P2.3 billion.

"With our expansion plans in the pipeline, we look forward to consistent growth in revenues and profits, and are prepared to extend generous dividends to our investors who have believed in the company all these years," Hans T. Sy, SM Prime president said.

SM Prime has set aside P5 billion for capital expenditures to continue with the construction of SM Mall of Asia, touted to be the country's biggest shopping mall along Roxas Boulevard.

The 448,000-square-meter SM Mall of Asia is set to open in December 2005.

Also set to open in 2005 are SM City San Lazaro (Manila), SM Valenzuela and SM City Molino (Cavite).

Total gross floor area will increase to 3.2 million square meters by end 2005 from 2.5 million square meters as of December 2004.

SM Prime owns and operates 19 malls across the country that attract an average 1.5 million customers daily.

Finance urges DOJ ...

From page B1

Celebrities who have already been charged with tax evasion under the RATE program included actor Richard Gomez, singer Regine Velasquez and basketball star Asi Taulava.

After the launching of RATE, the DOF said it would soon roll out together with the Bureau of Customs a massive anti-smuggling program called RATS (run after smugglers). Under the RATS, the DOF and the BOC hope to file smuggling cases at least once every two weeks.

RATS is aimed at addressing the perennial problem of smuggling, which was estimated to cost the government some P200 billion in lost revenues a year.

DISCLOSURES

PETROENERGY Resources Corp. disclosed that chairman/director Delfin L. Lazaro purchased 8,000 and 32,000 shares of PetroEnergy on May 9 and 10 respectively, through BPI Securities Inc.

* * *

BASIC Consolidated Inc. was designated by the consortium members as operator of Service Contract 41 (Sulu Sea), effective May 10, subject to the approval of Department of Energy.

* * *

EXPORT and Industry Bank Inc.'s director Sergio R. Ortiz-Luiz Jr. furnished a copy of SEC Form 23-B, reporting changes in his shareholdings for the month of April.

* * *

CHINA Banking Corp. disclosed that its principal shareholder, SM Investments Corp., reported changes in its shareholdings for the month of April.,

* * *

ALASKA Milk Corp. president and chief operating officer Wilfred Steven Uytengsu Jr. confirmed that the company's net income this year would go down by at least 15 percent from P497 million in 2004.

* * *

MEGAWORLD Corp.'s board declared a 20 percent stock dividend on its shares of common stock to be issued from a P7 billion increase in authorized capital stock.

Compiled by Erika Sarmiento, PDI Research

CAP gets SEC nod on equity deal

By Elizabeth L. Sanchez

THE SECURITIES and Exchange Commission (SEC) has given embattled pre-need firm College Assurance Plan Philippines Inc. (CAP) the go-ahead to pursue a deal that would bring in roughly P1 billion in new funding from its Zurich investor, International Global Capital Holdings AG (IGCH), INQUIRER sources at the corporate watchdog said yesterday.

The sources said, however, that the SEC required that money to be raised from CAP's proposed issuance of an "asset safekeeping receipt" (ASKR) to IGCH would go to the company's trust fund and used to pay plan holders.

CAP's trust fund stands at P4.7 billion. The ASKR, which simply verifies that CAP holds in its possession some $150 million worth of MRT bonds, would trigger the release of the new funds to CAP.

The ASKR does not encumber CAP's assets to the investor.

Once the ASKR is issued to IGHI, the Zurich firm will then put in new equity to replenish CAP's shrinking trust fund over a certain period.

Once cleared by the SEC, CAP will issue P1 billion worth of preferred shares to IGCH in exchange for the same amount of new capital, CAP director Robert John Sobrepeña said.

CAP will also have to seek the SEC's approval to raise its capital to P1 billion from P300 million.

Sobrepeña added that there was another local bank waiting to inject cash of P1 billion into CAP in exchange for preferred shares. This would allow the bank to expand its branch network through CAP's own 70 offices nationwide.

CAP earlier said that IGCH was willing to infuse $12.5 million into CAP in exchange for preferred shares. IGCH may also acquire one board seat. The infusion, equivalent to roughly P675 million, would address part of the first semester's P1.2 billion in tuition requirements.

To make the deal possible, CAP's trustee bank has written the SEC to seek approval of its equity deal with IGCH.

The second semester's requirement of P1.2 billion will be covered by the possible sale of CAP assets, including its 1,000-hectare property housing the CAP Building in Sucat and shares of stock.

ICTSI Q1 profit soared 66%

From page B2

during the first quarter, an increase of 12 percent from 397,190 TEUs handled in the same period in 2004.

Including volume handled by affiliate South Cotabato Integrated Port Services Inc., the cargo handler at the Port of General Santos, group-wide volume at the close of the first quarter was 469,626 TEUs, an increase of 11 percent over the previous year's 423,934 TEUs.

In Brazil, TSSA continued to deliver significant increases in volumes for the quarter, registering a 35-percent growth over the previous year. The MICT accounted for the bulk of consolidated volume, with first-quarter business growing by 14 percent from last year.

Another foreign subsidiary, Baltic Container Terminal (BCT) in Poland, posted a 4-percent growth in volume compared to the prior year.

Consolidated gross revenues from port operations increased by 19 percent to 2.37 billion from 1.99 billion reported for the first quarter of 2004.

Net revenues, or income from port operations after deducting port authorities' share, amounted to P1.7 billion, an increase of 22 percent over the same period last year. Port authorities' share represents fees and payments to the respective port authorities for each of the terminals operated by ICTSI. Total port authorities' share in revenues grew by 10 percent to P670 million, from P606 million last year.

Total consolidated operating expenses increased by 15 percent due principally to higher expenses at subsidiary BCT resulting from a strengthening in the zloty (Poland's currency) relative to both the US dollar and the peso; higher electricity and fuel cots recorded at the MICT, and increased project-related costs by subsidiary ICTSI Ltd. in connection with the growth in the company's international portfolio.

In the first quarter, ICTSI invested P315 million to continue expanding the handling capacity and improving operating efficiency of its three main facilities. ICTSI said it expects to make further investments in these facilities throughout the remainder of the year. *Elizabeth L. Sanchez*

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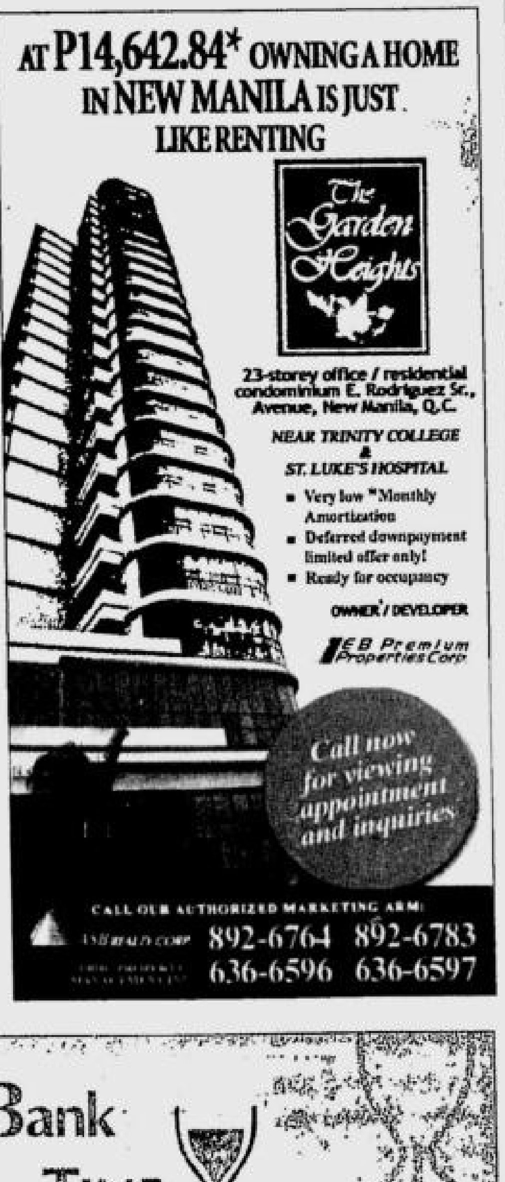
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Stick to bancassurance framework, banks told

TETANGCO

By Doris C. Dumlao

THE BANGKO Sentral ng Pilipinas has reminded banks that they are not allowed to sell pre-need plans under the bancassurance framework.

Banks, according to the BSP, are allowed only to cross-sell specific insurance products of affiliates.

Amid the anxiety over big pre-need companies that got into financial troubles such as College Assurance Plan Philippines Inc. and Pacific Plans Inc., the BSP called on banks to stick to the rules under the bancassurance framework.

"That (selling pre-need) is not in accordance with our regulations," BSP officer in charge Amando Tetangco Jr. told reporters.

Pre-need plans refer to products that cover foreseeable expenditures in the future such as retirement, education and even funeral arrangements.

BSP Deputy Governor for bank supervision Nestor Espenilla Jr. said the the BSP had a list of products that banks could sell under the bancassurance model but pre-need plans were not among them.

"We have a restriction on the products that banks can sell, including insurance products and credit cards. Also, they are allowed to sell only products of their affiliates," Espenilla explained.

To be considered an affiliate, the bank should have a minimum ownership of 5 percent in the concerned company or vice versa, he stressed.

The cross-selling of products under the bancassurance model has been allowed since 2000, when the BSP allowed Bank of the Philippine Islands to acquire the insurance companies of the Ayala group.

These companies, all under the Ayala Insurance Holdings Corp., were FGU Insurance Corp., Universal Reinsurance Corp., Ayala Life Assurance, Ayala Health Care and Ayala Plans. FGU Insurance was later merged with FEB Mitsui Marine Insurance Co. and is now known as the BPI/MS Insurance Corp.

The cross-selling of insurance products has emerged as another revenue-generating option for banks in Asia.

In the case of the pre-need industry, this sector has grown rapidly in the Philippines over the past few years but was recently besieged by the financial troubles encountered by some of its major players.

The viability of education plans, according to CAP and Pacific Plans, was adversely affected by the deregulation of tuition fees charged by private schools.

Pacific Plans Inc., a member of the Yuchengco Group of Companies, earlier filed for a suspension of payments, creating panic among planholders. It earlier separated its viable plans and transferred them to another YGC member-company called Lifetime Plans.

VAT measure seen to improve gov't tax collection efficiency

By Michelle V. Remo

THE DEPARTMENT of Finance said the soon-to-be enacted value-added tax bill would not only raise additional revenue for the cash-strapped government, but will also help detect cases of VAT evasion.

Finance Undersecretary Emmanuel Bonoan said the lifting of VAT exemptions—such as those on oil, power, and legal and medical services—would place more businesses in the VAT chain. This, he said, would help the government track VAT liabilities through the input-output credit feature of the VAT system.

He said it was the exemptions that hindered the tax collection efficiency.

"Now that there is likelihood the VAT bill will become a law, everyone in business will be linked to each other, so efficiency in collection will definitely improve," he said in an interview with reporters.

The government's current VAT collection efficiency was estimated at only 70 percent. The figure means that 30 percent of the taxpayers' VAT liabilities are not being remitted to the government.

The National Tax Research Center, a research agency attached to the Department of Finance, earlier said the government lost an average of P30.7 billion per year from 1999 to 2002. It explained that for the said period, the average potential VAT collection per year was P111 billion, but actual VAT collection averaged at only P80 billion.

The NTRC attributed the gap to the alleged under-declaration of sales and excessive claims of input VAT credits.

Also, the DOF earlier said the government lost P144 billion from VAT leakages in 2003. The government collected only P135 billion in VAT during the year, much lower than the P279 billion it had expected.

The DOF said that with the lifting of the VAT exemptions, the revenue leakage would be reduced and the collection efficiency rate would improve.

"Anything over 70 percent is realistic," said Bonoan.

Bonoan said that while the VAT bill has yet to be signed into law, the DOF and the Bureau of Internal Revenue were already preparing the draft implementing rules and regulations. He said that should the bill be signed into law in the next few days, it would take effect on July 1.

Aside from the lifting of the VAT exemptions, the bill will also give President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo a standby authority to raise the VAT rate from 10 to 12 percent in 2006. The President will have the power to raise the VAT rate if the national government's budget deficit this year will exceed 1.5 percent of the country's gross domestic product.

37 % GROWTH IN ROBINSONS PROFIT

Robinsons Land Corp. reported to its stockholders a 37-percent growth in its net income to P920.2 million last year from P670.6 million in the previous year. During RLC's recent stockholders' meeting, company officials (from left) Frederick D. Go. (executive vice president), Lance Y. Gokongwei (president), John L. Gokongwei Jr. (chair emeritus) and James L. Go (chair) said the growth could be attributed to efficient cost management and brisk business in the four divisions of the company—commercial centers division, high rise buildings division, housing and land development division, and hotels. These divisions contributed 59 percent, 21 percent, 9 percent and 11 percent to the company's gross revenue, respectively.

DTI steps up price monitoring operations

By Ronnel W. Domingo

THERE should be no sharp hikes in the prices of basic goods even with the recently approved P2 increase in transport fares, according to the Department of Trade and Industry.

Trade Secretary Juan B. Santos said the fare hike would have no direct impact on the price of basic commodities "since these goods are normally transported by middlemen who use their own vehicles and who have already taken into account the current fuel prices."

The Land Transportation and Franchising Regulatory Board approved on Monday the fare increase amid the continuing increases in fuel prices.

The decision, which will take effect on May 26, brings the basic fare for jeepneys to P7.50 and for buses without air-conditioning to P8 for the first four kilometers.

Santos said he had ordered DTI units to step up their monitoring activities, particularly on changes in the prices of basic goods.

The trade chief warned that the DTI would continue to protect consumers against profiteers who would take advantage of the LTFRB ruling and use it as an excuse to jack up prices.

"Although the DTI maintains the position that market forces should dictate the prices, it is mandated to look after the welfare of consumers and would not hesitate to go after profiteers," Santos said.

In particular, the DTI operates under the Consumer Act and the Price Act with regard to monitoring prices of basic goods.

The Price Act defines as profiteering an increase of more than 10 percent in the prices of commodities as compared to prices in a given previous month.

Last Tuesday, House Majority Leader Prospero Nograles proposed to Malacañang the creation of a special task force to monitor and regulate the pricing of "socially sensitive" products like liquefied petroleum gas, cooking oil, medicines and school supplies.

Under the Price Act, price controls or ceilings should be imposed if there was widespread price manipulation or during a state of emergency, calamity, war, rebellion or martial law.

Anti-piracy drive making headway, says OMB chief

THE COUNTRY continues to make a headway in its fight against intellectual property rights violations even as the Optical Media Board (OMB) vowed to work more closely with the private sector and other government agencies in addressing the piracy problem.

"It has been quite a year but we're just beginning," said OMB chair Eduardo "Edu" Manzano.

Manzano said a more focused and dedicated campaign by the OMB against audio, video and software piracy last year resulted in record raids and several confiscation, including the confiscation of 9.5 tons of pirated DVDs last June at the Ninoy Aquino International Airport (NAIA) and $8 million worth of optical discs last December.

"The OMB has been continuously working to improve the coordination with other government agencies like the Intellectual Property Office, Bureau of Customs, the Philippine National Police, the National Bureau of Investigation, as well as private companies," Manzano said.

Manzano cited the close coordination between the OMB and the IPO as an example of a successful collaborative effort that produced positive results. "The IPO, under director general Adrian Cristobal Jr., is a critical partner of the OMB in the campaign to curb and eventually eliminate piracy in the country. We hope to have similar working frameworks with other agencies like BOC under Commissioner Bert Lina," Manzano said.

The OMB, the predecessor of the Videogram Regulatory Board (VRB), was created in February 2003 through the Optical Media Act (RA 9239) in response to technological advances like CD and DVD writers which made it easier to produce pirated products commercially.

RA 9239 regulates the mastering, manufacturing, importation and export of optical discs regardless of content and CD burners used for commercial purposes; allows the OMB to deputize local executives and private organizations to help monitor compliance and report violations; empower OMB agents to apply for search warrants, take optical media, material and equipment into preventive custody; and impose fines and penalties against violators.

Penalties under RA 9239 range from 30-90 days of imprisonment and fines of up to P50,000 for "knowing possession for the purpose of sale, rental, distribution, other commercial purpose of several pirated items of the same content" to imprisonment of 3-6 years and fines up P1.5 million for "importing, exporting, acquiring, selling, distributing, possessing, operating equipment, parts and accessories without license" and "mastering, manufacturing, replicating optical media or intellectual property without authority or source identification code (SID)."

Manzano said optical media piracy was a multi-billion-peso business. Losses from piracy for the movie industry, alone, last year were estimated at close to P20 billion. The estimated total income losses for the gaming software industry was P2.25 billion. "This is the kind of money that piracy takes away from legitimate businesses both local and foreign," he said.

End of SIM-swap promo to save Smart, Globe P2.5B a year

By Clarissa S. Batino

MOBILE phone leaders Smart Communications Inc. and Globe Telecom Inc. are likely to save about P2.5 billion a year once they completely stop their costly SIM-swap promos.

Globe president Gerardo Ablaza said the savings were estimated at about P300 million each quarter or P1.2 billion a year.

Smart's head of legal affairs Rogelio Quevedo said his company would likely realize similar savings without the SIM swap offer.

Both telcos are worried that earnings this year could be eroded by a host of challenges, including rising inflation and increasing taxes.

"We have the same subscribers just moving from one network to the other. So the savings of our competitor applies to us also," said Quevedo.

Other sources, however, believed that Smart would tend to realize higher savings as it had been more aggressive in pushing the SIM swaps.

The prospective savings will help offset the expected softening of revenue arising from declining sales and subscriber take-up. Smart president Napoleon Nazareno said his company had been spending a lot on the SIM swaps.

Cost cutting might mean more to Globe after its expenses went up 24 percent in the first quarter at P6.6 billion while revenue grew by only 5 percent.

Smart's expenses reached P8.8 billion or up by 8 percent from P7.96 billion in the first quarter last year, while revenue improved by 14 percent.

Ablaza said Globe had stopped the SIM swaps since the start of the month while Smart said it would completely end the offer by May 11.

Third-player Sun Cellular said it had long stopped offering its SIM to subscribers of competitors.

Smart said it ended the first quarter with 20.2 million customers, Globe with 12.9 million and Sun Cellular with 1.7 million. Smart and Globe said they do not count subscribers who do not top-up within a month.

Industry sources estimated that about 3 to 4 million subscribers had been moving from one network to another almost every month to take advantage of the SIM swap promo.

Each SIM costs about US$2.50 (P140) plus P50 in free load.

"SIM swap activities cause rotational churn. This is why we are putting an end to the SIM swap operations," said Nazareno.

Manuel Pangilinan, chair of Philippine Long Distance Telephone Co., said the industry should end the SIM swap because it could have been artificially swelling the subscriber picture.

He said the swaps could be generating activity but these have not been churning revenue. Worse, the SIM swaps have been incurring significant expenses.

Philippine National Bank

NOTICE OF ANNUAL STOCKHOLDERS' MEETING

Notice is hereby given that the Annual Meeting of Stockholders of the Philippine National Bank will be held on May 24, 2005 at 8:00 a.m. at the Ballroom, Upper Lobby, Century Park Hotel, 599 Pablo Ocampo Sr. St., Malate, Manila.

The Agenda for the meeting is as follows:

1. Call to Order
2. Secretary's Proof of Notice and Quorum
3. Approval of the Minutes of the 2004 Annual Stockholders' Meeting held on May 25, 2004
4. Report of the President on the Results of Operations for the Year 2004
5. Approval of the 2004 Annual Report
6. Ratification of All Acts and Proceedings of the Board of Directors and Corporate Officers since the 2004 Annual Stockholders' Meeting
7. Election of Directors
8. Appointment of External Auditor
9. Other Matters
10. Adjournment

Minutes of the 2004 Annual Stockholders' Meeting as well as resolutions of the Board of Directors from May 25, 2004 will be available for examination during office hours at the Office of the Corporate Secretary.

Only stockholders of record as of April 25, 2005 will be entitled to notice of and vote at this meeting. Registration will begin at 6:00 a.m.

If you cannot personally attend the meeting, you may designate your authorized representative by submitting a PROXY to the Office of the Corporate Secretary not later than 5:00 p.m. on May 19, 2005. Any proxies so received will be validated on May 20, 2005, 9:30 a.m., at the Office of the Stock Transfer Agent at Allied Bank Center, 6754 Ayala Avenue, Makati City.

Pasay City, March 4, 2005

(SGD.) RENATO J. FERNANDEZ
Corporate Secretary

Japan Q1 GDP seen up 0.6%

TOKYO—Japan's economy is likely to have firmed in the first quarter of this year with the help of a rebound in personal consumption, but exports remained a weak spot, a Reuters poll showed on Wednesday.

Economists forecast a 0.6 percent rise in gross domestic product (GDP) in January-March from the previous quarter in real, price-adjusted terms, or an annualized 2.2 percent.

The median growth forecast from the 22 respondents would be a slight improvement on the previous quarter's meagre expansion of 0.1 percent, or 0.5 percent in annualized terms.

"The main engine was private spending," said Tomoko Fujii, senior foreign exchange strategist at Bank of America.

"We've seen a steady rise in employment since the end of last year and incomes are clearly recovering. The effect of higher corporate profits seems to be finally filtering through to households."

Personal spending is expected to have risen by 1.0 percent quarter-on-quarter in January-March after a 0.3-percent decline in October-December.

Some said much of the rise in spending was merely a rebound from the previous quarter, in which typhoons and snowstorms kept potential shoppers indoors. But most, like Fujii, said the improvement was also based on fundamentals.

Japan's jobless rate stood at 4.5 percent in March compared to 4.7 percent a year earlier. Winter bonuses in December were up 2.7 percent from a year before—the first rise in eight years.

The poll showed corporate capital spending was expected to have grown by 0.6 percent quarter-on-quarter compared to a 0.1 percent rise in the previous quarter.

But external demand was seen dragging down growth. The median forecast was that net exports subtracted 0.1 percentage point from GDP growth in January-March, a negative contribution for the third quarter in a row.

Reuters

Forced labor generates $32B in profit, ILO says

GENEVA—More than 12.3 million people are locked in forced labor, generating a massive $32 billion in profits for those who exploit them, the International Labor Organization said in a first ever global snapshot of the problem Wednesday.

In a study advocating a global alliance to wipe out an expanding "social evil," the ILO estimated that forced labor occurred mainly in Asia but fostered largely unchallenged worldwide.

"Forced labor represents the underside of globalization and denies people their basic rights and dignity," ILO Director General Juan Somavia said.

Some 9.5 million of the victims of forced labor are in Asia, 1.3 million in Latin America and the Caribbean, 660,000 in sub-Saharan Africa and 260,000 in the Middle East and North Africa, according to the study's estimates.

Another 360,000 are in industrialized countries and 210,000 in transition countries in central and eastern Europe.

The majority—56 percent—are women and girls, while just under half are children.

Asia's biggest forced labor problem still involves bonded workers mainly in Nepal, India and Pakistan, where impoverished people fall into a debt trap and are forced to work to pay back loans from employers, the ILO found.

Forced labor was defined by an international convention in the 1930s to include all involuntary work extracted from a person under the threat of a penalty.

That extended from the better known use of imprisoned camp labor by totalitarian regimes to bosses withholding wages or identity documents to stop workers leaving, officials said.

Most of the victims—9.8 million people—are vulnerable, poor people exploited by private agents as bonded labor, or forced into domestic or agricultural work, the report underlined.

While most forced labor in the private sector is thought to be underground activity commanded by a few individuals, the ILO said there were signs that it was reaching into the mainstream corporate sector through sub-contractors.

AFP

Fed to keep raising rates

DALLAS—The US central bank was correct to stay the course last week by raising interest rates gradually because recent indications of an economic soft spot are misguided, top Federal Reserve officials said on Tuesday.

But the Federal Reserve can pick up the pace of rate rises if needed.

"The FOMC (Federal Open Market Committee) has emphasized that it is prepared, if necessary, to move more aggressively to protect the relatively low rate of core inflation that now exists," St. Louis Federal Reserve president William Poole said in remarks to be delivered on Wednesday in St. Louis. The text was released early on the Internet.

The Fed last week raised interest rates by a quarter percentage point to 3.0 percent, as expected. It retained a reference to "measured pace" that markets take to mean the Fed will keep tightening monetary policy at this rate. It has increased rates by 25 basis points eight times since June.

Poole, who is not a voting member of the FOMC this year, said the committee will be able to maintain this pace of policy action going forward.

"The FOMC's best judgment at this time is that the target federal funds rate can continue to rise at a measured pace and that this policy will maintain economic growth without rising inflation."

The latest Fed rate increase came as financial markets were concerned that the US economy had hit a soft spot.

But Dallas Fed president Richard Fisher said weak economic data in March had probably been influenced by the timing of Easter, which was early this year, and that strong April jobs data since had vindicated the Fed's move.

US growth slowed to an annualized 3.1 percent in the first quarter of the year, but economists think the early Easter break may have contributed to a string of weak March data.

Reuters

Asian stocks fall

BANGKOK—Southeast Asian stocks fell on Wednesday as weak US stocks deflated enthusiasm and strong quarterly results failed to boost Singapore's index, but Bangkok shares pared early losses after an upgrade by Fitch Ratings.

Singapore's key share index was down 0.28 percent, having hit its lowest level since May 6 in early trade, and Thailand's main index inched up 0.1 percent after falling to levels last seen on May 4.

Malaysian and Indonesian stocks each fell nearly one percent and the Philippine index was down 0.53 percent.

Singapore technology firm Datacraft Asia fell one percent despite a jump in quarterly profits on a recovery in technology spending by businesses. But property firm CapitaLand Ltd. rose 1.7 percent on its plan to invest in a Japanese property joint venture.

Analysts in Bangkok said regional sentiment was dampened by weak US shares that were hit by rumors of huge hedge fund losses and concerns about the economic impact of high oil prices.

"Regional markets seemed to ignore domestic factors," said Kim Eng Securities analyst Pongpan Apinyakul.

Investors eyed blue-chips like top energy firm PTT and Kasikornbank, each rising nearly one percent after international rating agency Fitch Ratings upgraded Thailand's long-term foreign currency rating.

"The upgrade was a positive factor for the Thai market, but not a strong boost given the market was worried about high oil prices," Pongpan said.

Wall Street's declines also triggered selling in Kuala Lumpur and Jakarta, dealers said.

Telecommunication stocks dragged the market down in Jakarta, with Indosat off one percent and Telkom down 2 percent.

In the Philippines, mall developer SM Prime Holdings Inc. was unchanged after it reported a 7 percent rise in quarterly profit, helped by rental revenues from two new malls.

Petron Corp extended losses, down 2.9 percent, but the Bank of Philippine Islands rebounded, up one percent after Tuesday's falls.

Reuters

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Editor **Aries Espinosa**

Diplomats attend 'Revitalized Philippine Mining Industry' briefing

HEADS of diplomatic missions and embassy economic counselors attended the briefing on the "Revitalized Philippine Mining Industry" held at Quisumbing Torres in Bonifacio Global City on April 14.

Ambassador Delia Domingo Albert, former foreign affairs secretary and Presidential Adviser for Minerals Development, lawyer Leo Dominguez of Quisumbing Torres, and Philip Romualdez, president of the Philippine Chamber of Mines, gave the briefing on the Revitalized Philippine Mining Industry.

As the President's Special Envoy for Mining, Ambassador Albert's role is to implement national policy to revitalize and promote the Philippine mining industry by informing the international community of the investment possibilities offered by the industry and its role in the economic development of the country.

The briefing was a follow up on a series of mining road show activities that the Philippine government initiated in partnership with the private sector representatives. The efforts to revitalize the Philippine mining industry and to place the Philippines strategically at the forefront of global minerals development had a jumpstart after the Philippine Supreme Court, on February 2005, decided with finality that the Mining Act of 1995 and its implementing rules and regulations are constitutional. According to lawyer Leo Dominguez, author of the Primer on Philippine Minerals Industry and various legal documents on mining, "The decision spells out a very clear and positive government policy towards investment in the mining sector. The resolution of this case could provide the impetus for the mining industry to realize the mineral potential of the Philippines that the government estimates at $840 billion."

At the briefing, Ambassador Albert invited her fellow diplomats to encourage investors from their respective countries to give Philippine Mining a second look. According to Ambassador Albert, "as the Philippines enters an exciting and dynamic phase of mining for the nation's sustainable economic growth, the players are also faced with the task of streamlining processes for favorable investment climate and to check and balance mining activities to ensure socially responsible practices. This requires a strong government mandate, vigilance from the private sector and synergy among players."

Philip Romualdez added, "Mining is an industry that definitely deserves a second look. It can make a difference in our country's development." Based on government estimates of copper ore resources at 1.44 billion tones, gold ore at 795 million tones and nickel ore at 534 million tones as of 2002. The Philippines is potentially the fifth largest mineral producer in the world.

The briefing elicited informed discussions and attracted inquiries on legal issues, and identification of specific procedural matters for bilateral cooperation

LEXMARK APPOINTS EQUITABLE PCI BANK AS TRUSTEE

Equitable PCI Bank Trust Banking was recently appointed as trustee by Lexmark Int'l Phils Inc (Lipi), and Lexmark Research and Dev't Corp (LRDC) for its Employees' Retirement Fund. LRDC is a wholly-owned subsidiary of Lipi. It is a fast growing, integrated global developer and designer of software and firmware for Lexmark's printer products. With over 55 years experience in the office equipment and supplies, Lexmark is a leader in the printing solution business. It products include laser, inkjet and dot matrix printers, as well as a wide variety of related supplies for home and office markets. With the signing of the agreement, Lipi and LRDC join the roster of multinational and Filipino companies that have chosen Equitable PCI Bank as trustee. EPCIBank Trust Banking is widely acknowledged in the industry for its expertise in Fund Management. It is presently the third largest trust organization in the country. The agreement was signed by (from left): Stanley Gene Combs (president and CEO or LRDC); Marvin Fausto (EPCIB SVP and trust officer); Glen Stewart Westerman (president and CEO of Lipi); and John Paul Wanek (assistant treasurer of Lexmark Int'l). The signing was witnessed by Joy Gonzales Sa-a (senior manager of EPCIB-Cebu Trust Desk); Lilibeth Peralta (Lexmark CFO); Robin Baladjay (EPCIB marketing officer); Nathan Ray Gamban (Lipi plant manager); Mark Van Dyke (LRDC GM-software); Priscilla Wong (Lexmark HR director); Jonathan Villaflor (Lipi plant manager) and Eli Trinidad (Lipi HR manager). Equitable PCI Bank marks its 55th year this 2005. It is presently the country's third largest banking group enjoying top tier standing in corporate and commercial banking, treasury, trust banking, credit and payment cards, remittances, leasing and investment banking. It has over 400 branches and more than 500 FASTeller ATMs nationwide, with access to 5,500 BancNet, Megalink, and ExpressNet ATMs.

ABS-CBN reaffirms commitment to responsible programming

AMID criticism regarding the so-called network ratings war, ABS-CBN Broadcasting Corporation remains firm in its commitment to quality, responsible programming.

In an address delivered at the recent Universitas Youth Conference, ABS-CBN president Luis F. Alejandro underscored the complex part television plays in society, noting that no other medium has wielded as pervasive an influence as it has.

While he acknowledged that television may have had some negative effects, he maintained, "Its impact has been mitigated by its great positive energy. For television keeps us abreast of the days and times not just in our nation but around the world, reflecting current reality and mores in both truth and fiction, and in this mirroring of society becomes both a source of entertainment and information of choice."

Alejandro traced the beginnings of television, observing that industry forerunners envisioned utilizing "the unprecedented power of television" for the good of the society. For instance, he mentioned how Geny Lopez saw television as an instrument for forging national unity.

He explained that while social analysts may claim that the role of television has changed, "to the person holding the remote control, television is still the same - something that entertains him and gives him what he needs. And what he needs does not always mean grand dreams or lofty goals." For, he said, the Filipino viewer "watches not with his eyes, but his heart. He needs to laugh, cry, cheer, jeer and learn, but most importantly, he needs to empathize."

This, according to Alejandro, is where the potential of television for serving as a tool for nation building lies. "We should target Juan de la Cruz through his greatest organ - his heart." He explained that this belief underlies the advocacy of ABS-CBN in educational television, environmental conservation, and the protection of children, as well as its swift and selfless response to the plight of the victims of national calamities.

Alejandro, however, emphasized that, "Responsible programming is merely a starting point." He reiterated that while media and television are powerful tools, "Like many tools, they merely exist to bring us closer to what we want for ourselves."

The conference was organized by Universitas, an association of scholars and youth volunteers from various colleges and universities dedicated to training future leaders through values education and moral formation. As part of their preparation, members benefit from forums where leading professionals from fields such as media, business, government, and the academe, discuss contemporary issues and concerns.

CITYSTATE SAVINGS BANK CONGRATULATES ISUZU GENCARS MAKATI

Publicly listed Citystate Savings Bank and Isuzu Gencars Makati are both winners. The bank was adjudged 2004 Top Savings Bank by the National Consumers Affairs Foundation and only recently, Isuzu Gencars Makati bagged the 2004 Top Dealer of the Year. Citystate Bank president, D. Alfred A. Cabangon (right) congratulates Mendel A. Noche, Gencars executive vice president, following the car dealer's awarding. Noche affirms that Citystate Savings Bank is Isuzu's Gencars' preferred bank because of its excellent service to its clients and an array of innovative products. Citystate Bank was named 2004 Most Outstanding Savings Bank by the Consumers Union of the Philippines.

SAS business intelligence forum slated

PROMINENT business consultant Peter Wallace, along with top representatives from Unilever Phils and the Bureau of Internal Revenue, will be guest speakers during SAS Philippines' 2nd annual forum on May 26, from 11:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. at New World Renaissance Hotel in Makati City. Entitled "SAS Forum Philippines 2005: The Quest for Certainty", the forum will showcase customer testimonials and solutions of SAS, the leading provider of business intelligence and analytics software, and provide a peer-to-peer opportunity for executives to discuss the latest issues and trends in business intelligence and exchange ideas, success stories, and best practices. As president of The Wallace Business Forum, Peter Wallace will give the keynote presentation on the topic "Leading and Managing with Confidence in Uncertain Times." Medel Aviles, customer logistics manager of Unilever Phils will share his company's experience in activity-based management as applied to customer relations, while Annie Reyes, director II for information systems delivery service of the Bureau of Internal Revenue will discuss efficient government service through proactive information delivery. The forum will feature the breakthrough technology of SAS9 as the Enterprise Intelligence Platform in conjunction with the technologies of Intel — the Platinum Sponsor, and HP — the Exclusive Hardware Sponsor. For inquiries on SAS Forum Philippines 2005, please call (02)633-6916 to 18.

Bits & Clips

FCW visits Manila

ON MAY 12 to 14, a delegation of the Federation of Cuban Women (FCW) will visit Metro Manila. The delegation will be headed by its general secretary, Maria Yolanda Ferrer Gomez. Gomez is also a member of the National Assembly of People's Power, the parliament of Cuba. Together with the FCW general secretary are Magalys Arocha Dominguez, a member of the International Relations Department of the FCW National Secretariat and Milagros Martinez, another FCW official. The FCW is a fundamental force in raising the ideological, political and cultural levels of Cuban women, in protecting the full exercise of women's rights, and in ensuring equal access and opportunities for women in all areas and levels of Cuban society. The visit of the delegation of the Federation of Cuban Women will be very fruitful to the Filipino people, especially to the women and youth. The Cuban visitors will be able to share and exchange ideas and experiences on the role of women for national development, social progress and the promotion of world peace.

Foreign Chambers SME Trade Fair 2005

THE ANNUAL Foreign Chambers SME Trade Fair will be held on May 13 to 14 from 10 a.m. to 7 p.m. at the Philippine Trade Training Center (PTTC) in Pasay City. The SME Trade Fair will also provide business opportunities to small and medium enterprises to market their products and services to multinational companies, the diplomatic community and the various members of the foreign chambers. There will also be special activities such as a joint luncheon of the participating chambers on May 13, at the Westin Philippine Plaza, and business opportunity SME's at the PTTC. Sponsorship packages and exhibit spaces are available for companies and other foreign chamber members who would like to be a part of this captive market. For inquiries or reservations, call 845-1324/759-6680 and look for Sweet Esmao or Theresa Rada or email at sme@eccp.com.

Ericsson chosen by Telstra

ERICSSON has been selected as the exclusive 3G/WCDMA vendor of Telstra for up to the next five years. The estimated value of the framework agreement is more than $78M over the term. Ericsson will supply layered architecture core and radio access network equipment, including HSDPA and network rollout services. This contracts complement the Telstra-Hutchinson 3GSM network sharing arrangement which gives Telstra access to a fully optimized, fully operational network across five capital cities from July 1, and provides a way forward to increase 3GSM coverage as demand requires.

MECO DONATES JEANS TO TRAINING SCHOOL FOR BOYS

Ma. Isabela O. Golamco (second from left), director and chief finance officer of the Manila Economic and Cultural Office, turns over 600 pairs of jeans to Zenaida Gorospe (third from left), officer-in-charge of the National Training School for the Boys in Tanay, Rizal. Witnessing the activity was Thelma Bi-olena, Regional Director, Department of Social Welfare and Development Region IV-A. The jeans were donated by the World Lee Family Association based in Taipei, Taiwan to Meco's Assistance to Nationals officer Butch Lee. Golamco said she consulted with the Department of Social Welfare and Development to determine who should benefit from the donation and they recommended the training school because it does not receive donation on a regular basis. Formerly know as the Reformatory for the Boys, the training school is a youth-caring center primarily established to care, protect, train and rehabilitate boys aged between nine and 18 who have committed criminal offenses.

36TH NATIONAL MARKETING CONVENTION SET

In pursuit of marketing excellence, the Philippine Marketing Association invites marketing and non-marketing professionals, entrepreneurs, educators and students to its National Marketing Convention slated on May 25 and 26 at the Westin Philippine Plaza. The two-day annual conference carries the theme 'Extreme Marketing Challenge: The Road to Convergence' with topics on marketing superiority, telecommunications convergence, non-traditional bank marketing and creativity on the NMC committee is comprised of (seated, from left): Gennie De Guia - director, PR and corporate communications; Ting Samonte - finance/exhibit chair; Von Hizon - program chair; Sonia De Guzman - chair, marketing; 2nd row standing (from left) Dr. Nards Garcia - program chair; Donald Patrick Lim - president, PMA; Pam Adriano - NMC director/EVP, PMA; Cergen Go - chair, ways and means; and Hermie del Rosario - chair, marketing. Not shown in photo is Benison Cu, NMC over-all chair.

HAGEDORN SUPPORTS PLDT 'CABLE WATCH 164'

The city government of Puerto Princesa led by Mayor Edward Hagedorn, officials of the Philippine Long Distance Telephone Company and the Philippine National Police, leaders of various barangays and junk shop owners join hands to combat cable thefts and pilferages in the city and its barangays during the launching of PLDT-Piltel's 'Cable Watch 164' program recently in Puerto Princesa City. Joining hands in a show of unity are (from left): PLDT Luzon Asset Protection Division team leader Lauro Honrade; PLDT Emergency Response Management Division team leader Juanito Miranda; PLDT Quezon Business Zone head Rene Lescano; Palawan PNP Provincial Director PSSupt. Rey Lañada; Brgy. Capt. Juan Arqueño Jr; Mayor Edward Hagedorn; PLDT Luzon Asset Protection Division head Wilfredo Arcinue; Puerto Princesa City Chief of Police PSupt. Feliciano Dimayuga; Zeny Tanael (representing junk shop owners of Puerto Princesa City); PLDT Quezon Business Area head Merdoc Mendoza; and PLDT-Piltel Palawan business specialist Susan Corpuz.

Republic of the Philippines
NATIONAL HISTORICAL INSTITUTE
NHI Bldg., T.M. Kalaw St., Ermita, Manila

BULLETIN OF VACANT POSITIONS

(In compliance with RA 7041)

ADMINISTRATIVE AIDE II, SG-2, Item No. NHI-NCCAC-ADA2-19-2004. Must have knowledge of operating a reproduction machine.

ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT III, SG-09, Item No. NHI-NCCAC-ADAS3-4-2004. Completion of 2 years studies in college or high school graduate with vocational/trade course in computer operation; 2 years of relevant experience; 8 hours of relevant training; CS Sub-Professional/Data Encoder/ appropriate eligibility for first level position.

HISTORY RESEARCHER II, SG-14, Item No. NHI-NCCAC-HTRYR2-31-1998. Bachelor's degree relevant to the job, preferably major in History or Museology; one year relevant experience (curatorship); 4 hours relevant training (curatorship); CS Professional/appropriate eligibility for 2nd level position.

SECURITY GUARD I, SG-3, Item No. NHI-NCCAC-SECG1-2-1998. Completion of secondary school course with relevant training. Security Guard license (CSC MC 11, s. 1996, Cat. II)

DRAFTSMAN II, SG-08, Item No. NHI-NCCAC-DFM2-2-1998. Completion of two years studies in college or high school graduate with relevant vocational/trade course; 1 year of relevant training; 4 hours of relevant training; Career Service Subprofessional/Draftsman or Illustrator/ appropriate eligibility for 1st level position.

ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT I, SG-07, Item No. NHI-NCCAC-ADAS1-10-2004. High school graduate or completion of course in photography; Photographer/appropriate eligibility for 1st level position.

ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT II, SG-08, Item Nos. NHI-NCCAC-ADAS2-10-2004. Completion of two (2) years studies in college or high school graduate with vocational/trade course in illustration drafting; 1 year relevant experience; 4 hours of relevant training; Career Service Subprofessional/Draftsman or Illustrator appropriate eligibility for 1st level position.

DENTIST
DENTAL ASSISTANT

- FEMALE (Preferably Single)
- 22 TO 30 YEARS OLD
- TEAM PLAYER
- AGGRESSIVE
- HARDWORKING

Pls. call 892-9058 / 892-4427
for appt. or submit resumé to
1202 Medical Plaza, Cor. Amorsolo
& dela Rosa Sts., Legaspi Village,
Makati City

Israel Celebrates!
57th Independence
Day Festivities

Blessed is everyone
who blesses you, O Israel...

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the Messiah
(The Glory of Israel)

With all our best wishes

OHOL YAOHUSHUA
P.O. Box 1482,
Jerusalem, Israel 91014
http://www.YAOHUSHUA.org/index.html

Republic of the Philippines
DEPARTMENT OF LAND REFORM
SORSOGON PROVINCIAL LAND REFORM OFFICE
Balogo, Sorsogon, City
Tel. Nos. (056) 211-1591; (056) 211-2460

NOTICE OF COVERAGE

Pursuant to Section 7 of R.A. No. 6657, otherwise known as the Comprehensive Agrarian Reform Law of 1988, the Republic of the Philippines, through the Department of Land Reform (DLR), hereby subjects under the coverage of the Comprehensive Agrarian Reform Program the following landholdings, to wit:

NAME OF OWNER	TITLE No./ TAX DEC No.	LOT/SURVEY No.	AREA (ha.)	LOCATION
Hrs. of Teodoro R. Labayo	T-8627	1223	2.1365	Beriran, Gubat, Sorsogon
Hrs. of Leopoldo Habelito	P-5303	8157	1.3238	Dita, Gubat, Sorsogon
Hrs. of Pablo Moncada	P-9741	3011	0.3403	Ariman, Gubat, Sorsogon
Hrs. of Pablo Moncada	P-4647	1778	0.3181	Ariman, Gubat, Sorsogon
Hrs. of Margarita Embate	P-7045	9514	1.8807	Payawin, Gubat, Sorsogon
Hrs. of Margarita Embate	–	4	0.2925	Dita, Gubat, Sorsogon
Hrs. of Margarita Embate	–	8	0.3623	Dita, Gubat, Sorsogon
Hrs. of Margarita Embate	–	9	0.2485	Dita, Gubat, Sorsogon
Hrs. of Andres Pura	T-37627	9351	8.0518	Tiris, Gubat, Sorsogon
Hrs. of Paz Pura Mangsoang	P-13943	2810	1.1810	Tabi, Gubat, Sorsogon
Hrs. of Ramon Estipona	P-5213	1345	0.3450	San Ignacio, Gubat, Sorsogon
Hrs. of Pablo Moncada	–	3325	0.6310	Buenavista, Gubat, Sorsogon
Hrs. of Purificacion Estaras	–	1265	1.4774	Beriran, Gubat, Sorsogon
Hrs. of Purificacion Estaras	–	1470	3.0530	San Ignacio, Gubat, Sorsogon
Hrs. of Purificacion Estaras	–	2825	1.8788	Bulacao, Gubat, Sorsogon
Hrs. of Purificacion Estaras	–	2476	3.7312	Bulacao, Gubat, Sorsogon
Hrs. of Purificacion Estaras	–	1434	0.4538	San Ignacio, Gubat, Sorsogon
Hrs. of Juan Chiao	–	8131	0.6945	Dita, Gubat, Sorsogon
Francisco Encinas	–	7615	2.5269	Jupi, Gubat, Sorsogon
Hrs. of Ramon Estipona	–	7620	0.3118	Jupi, Gubat, Sorsogon
Leoncia Jerusalem	–	1564	2.5555	Tabi, Gubat, Sorsogon
Leoncia Jerusalem	–	1305	0.6181	San Ignacio, Gubat, Sorsogon
Phil. I.C.	–	1779	1.8494	Ariman, Gubat, Sorsogon
Phil. I.C.	–	1516	1.3117	Beriran, Gubat, Sorsogon
Phil. I.C.	–	7857	1.1635	Tagaytay, Gubat, Sorsogon
Phil. I.C.	–	1779	2.0000	Ariman, Gubat, Sorsogon
Phil. I.C.	–	6502	29.4515	Bentuco, Gubat, Sorsogon
Phil. I.C.	–	11421	1.0354	Tagaytay, Gubat, Sorsogon
Phil. I.C.	–	7862	8.3823	Tagaytay, Gubat, Sorsogon
Socorro Villaroya	P-2980	4614-C	3.3623	Tigkiw, Gubat, Sorsogon
Rosario Hagad	P-5303	8157	1.3238	Dita, Gubat, Sorsogon
Socorro Sabater	P-21515	4067-B	2.2692	San Antonio, Barcelona , Sor.
Lourdes Derpo	T-31244	3907	4.6715	Fabrica, Barcelona, Sorsogon
Geronimo Garcia, Jr./Feliciano Embile	UT	5311	0.9877	San Isidro, Barcelona, Sorsogon
Hrs. of Paciente Halum	P-9069	924	2.1238	San Isidro, Bulusan, Sorsogon
Hrs. of Paciente Halum	P-9068	933	3.1952	San Isidro, Bulusan, Sorsogon
Hrs. of Paciente Halum	P-9067	1209	0.2166	San Isidro, Bulusan, Sorsogon
Hrs. of Nicanor Fortin	P-8365	2763	1.1495	Lalud, Bulusan, Sorsogon
Hrs. of Nicanor Fortin	P-8364	2767	4.6898	Lalud, Bulusan, Sorsogon
Hrs. of Nicanor Fortin	P-9301	2775	0.8859	Lalud, Bulusan, Sorsogon
Paz Jao-Maghari	P-27868	3568	4.8980	San Roque, Bulusan, Sorsogon
Paz Jao-Maghari	P-22882	–	0.3166	San Roque, Bulusan, Sorsogon
Paz Jao-Maghari	P-27869	–	4.3474	San Roque, Bulusan, Sorsogon
Pilar Galias	–	1350	0.8991	San Isidro, Irosin, Sorsogon
Oscar Espenilla	–	496, 487, 492	3.1000	Tinampo, Irosin, Sorsogon
Hrs. of Rufino Golpo	–	990	4.7500	Bulawan, Irosin, Sorsogon
Hrs. of Raymundo Jayco	–	508	8.1500	Monbon, Irosin, Sorsogon
Hrs. of Marcelino Michelena	–	2024	8.0350	Tongdol, Irosin, Sorsogon
Hrs. of Marcelino Michelena	–	1996	8.5094	Tongdol, Irosin, Sorsogon
Hrs. of Herman de Ortube	–	2656	2.5411	Bagsangan, Irosin, Sorsogon
Hrs. of Melanio Calinisan	–	3186	17.8675	Tabon-Tabon, Irosin, Sorsogon
Hrs. of Miguel Balubar	–	479-A,B,C & D	1.8373	Tinampo, Irosin, Sorsogon
Hrs. of Miguel Balubar	–	478-A,B,C & D	1.3941	Tinampo, Irosin, Sorsogon
Hrs. of Miguel Balubar	–	483-A,B & C	0.9398	Tinampo, Irosin, Sorsogon
Hrs. of Miguel Balubar	–	2562-A & B	1.7741	Bagsangan, Irosin, Sorsogon
Ortube Dev't. Corp.	–	2656	2.5411	Bagsangan, Irosin, Sorsogon
Hrs. of Librada Gabinete	–	3541	0.1776	Buenavista, Irosin, Sorsogon
Hrs. of Librada Gabinete	–	3519	0.1777	Buenavista, Irosin, Sorsogon
Hrs. of Librada Gabinete	–	3523-A	0.3022	Buenavista, Irosin, Sorsogon
Hrs. of Librada Gabinete	–	2472	0.9615	Buenavista, Irosin, Sorsogon
Hrs. of Norberto Furing	–	1332-A	0.8798	Batang, Irosin, Sorsogon
Hrs. of Norberto Furing	–	1392	2.8163	Batang, Irosin, Sorsogon
Elvira de Castro/Dionisia de Castro, Manuel de Castro	T-1909	2425, 2457, 2272, 2367, 3250, 3247, 3246, 3243	72.1986	Pili, Magallanes, Sorsogon
Phil. I.C.	–	3980	2.6628	San Rafael, Pilar, Sorsogon
Phil. I.C.	–	4530	2.9242	San Rafael, Pilar, Sorsogon
Phil. I.C.	–	4592	0.6850	San Rafael, Pilar, Sorsogon
Sps. Esteban & Cresencia Chu	T-27060	596-E	14.6977	San Antonio, Pilar, Sorsogon
Sps. Esteban & Cresencia Chu	T-27060	596-Q	17.3407	San Antonio, Pilar, Sorsogon
Rosa Mendez	P-4800	4348	7.1557	Calpi, Pilar, Sorsogon
Rosa Mendez	P-4659	4350	4.6280	Calpi, Pilar, Sorsogon
Miguel Gabarda	P-9072	4351	5.6810	Calpi, Pilar, Sorsogon
Miguel Gabarda	P-15157	283	5.9300	Pangpang, Pilar, Sorsogon
Hrs. of Teofilo Hernandez	T-1385	1-6, Psu-52843	155.6875	Palanas, Pilar, Sorsogon

Whenever applicable, concerned owners have the right or privilege to:

1. Apply for an exemption clearance or for exclusion from CARP coverage;
2. Retain an area not exceeding five (5) hectares pursuant to Section 6 of RA 6657;
3. Nominate child/children who may qualify as beneficiary/beneficiaries to the subject landholding; and/or
4. Submit evidence for determining just compensation of the subject landholding.

To exercise any of the above rights/privileges, the necessary application or petition should be filed before the Government incurs any expense necessary for acquisition and distribution of the subject landholding not later than sixty (60) calendar days from date of this Notice. Any late legal action that may be taken beyond the said 60-day period, resulting in the nullification of this CARP proceeding, shall hold liable for the reimbursement of all expense that the Government has spent for acquisition and distribution of the subject landholding.

Failure to file the proper application for retention within sixty (60) days from date of this Notice is deemed a waiver of the right to retention under Section 6 of RA 6657, in accordance with the applicable rules and regulations of the DAR. Within thirty (30) days from filing of the application, you shall submit to the Municipal Agrarian Reform Officer (MARO) a sketch map of the area you wish to retain, failure to do within said 30-day period constitutes an authorization for the MARO to choose the retention area in your behalf. The DAR may disapprove your choice of retention area if it is not compact and contiguous.

The privilege to nominate your child/children who may qualify as beneficiary/ries is waived if you fail to submit to the MARO within 60 days from date of this Notice the proper application with the complete names of your nominees, their addresses, birth dates, and other relevant information in accordance with the applicable rules and regulations of the DAR.

The right to question the valuation of your landholding is waived if you fail to submit to the MARO within 60 days from date of this Notice, a Statement of Production and Net Income (Annex "A" of A.O. No. 1, Series of 2003) and other evidence necessary for determining just compensation under Section 17 of RA 6657, in accordance with the applicable rules and regulations of the DAR.

Pursuant to Executive Order No. 405 dated 14 June 1990, the DAR shall request the Land Bank of the Philippines (LBP) to determine the land value of the subject landholding.

(Sgd.) **EMERSON N. MORAL**
Provincial Agrarian Reform Officer II

(PDI–May 12 & 13, 2005)

EXCERPT FROM THE MINUTES OF THE REGULAR EN BANC MEETING OF THE COMMISSION ON ELECTIONS HELD ON APRIL 19, 2005

Present:
Chairman Benjamin S. Abalos, Sr.
Commissioner Rufino S.B. Javier
Commissioner Mehol K. Sadain
Commissioner Florentino A. Tuason, Jr.
Commissioner Manuel A. Barcelona, Jr.

On Official Business:
Commissioner Resurreccion Z. Borra
Commissioner Virgilio O. Garcillano

xxx xxx xxx

05-0430. IN THE MATTER OF ADOPTING CERTAIN RESOLUTIONS PROMULGATED DURING THE MAY 10, 2004 NATIONAL AND LOCAL ELECTIONS FOR PURPOSES OF THE SPECIAL ELECTIONS TO FILL THE VACANCY IN THE POSITION OF MEMBER, HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, 5TH DISTRICT, CEBU PROVINCE.

This pertains to the adoption of various Comelec Resolution promulgated during the May 10, 2004 National and Local Elections for purposes of the Special Elections to be conducted on May 30, 2005 to fill up the vacant position in the 5th District of Cebu province in view of the assumption to office as Secretary of Tourism of Congressman-elect Joseph Ace Durano.

In relation to the call of the government to adopt practical and necessary austerity measures due to financial constraint; and considering the publication of resolutions will incur big amount of money, the Commission **RESOLVED**, as it hereby **RESOLVES**, to adopt the following resolutions from the May 10, 2004 Elections for purposes of the Special Elections in the 5th District, Province of Cebu, which enforcement shall only cover the territorial jurisdiction of the Fifth Congressional District Cebu comprising Danao City and ten (10) municipalities;

Resolution No.	Subject Matter
6452	Rules Delegating to Comelec Field Officials the Hearing and Reception of Evidence of Disqualification Cases Filed in Connection with the May 10, 2004 National and Local Elections; Motu Proprio Actions and Disposition of Disqualification Cases
6453	Guidelines on the Filing of Certificate of Candidacy and Nomination of Official Candidates of Registered Political Parties in Connection with the May 10, 2004 National and Local Elections
6454	Deputation of the Department of National Defense and the AFP, DILG, including the NAPOLCOM and the PNP, and other Law Enforcement of Agencies for the Purpose of Ensuring Free, Orderly, Honest, Peaceful and Credible Conduct of the May 10, 2004 National and Local Elections
6456	Enforcement of the Prohibition Against Appointment or Hiring of New Employees, Creation or Filling Up of New Position; Giving Salary Increases, Transferring/Detailing Civil Service Employees and Suspension of Election of Local Officials in connection with the May 10, 2004 National and Local Elections
6458	In the Matter of Deputizing the National Electrification Administration, the NAPOCOR and MERALCO in connection with the May 10, 2004 National and Local Elections
6459	Deputation of the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas, DBP, LBP, GSIS, SSS, NAPOCOR, PNOC, DPWH, DILG, DOTC, DA, DENR, DAR, NIA, NEA, NFA, including all the LGUs for the purpose of Utilizing their Motor Vehicle and Communication Facilities in connection with the May 10, 2004 National and Local Elections
6632	In the Matter of Requesting the Honorable Secretary of Justice to Assign Prosecutors as Members of a Special Task Force to Assist the Commission in the Investigation and Prosecution of Election Offenses in the May 10, 2004 Elections Reiterating the Continuing Deputation of Prosecutor under Rule 34 of the Comelec Rules of Procedure
6486	Rules and Regulations on the Mandatory Drug Test of Candidates for Public Offices both National and Local, under Section 36(h) of R.A. No. 9125 in connection with the May 10, 2004 Synchronized National and Local Elections
6514	Amending Resolution No. 6486
6498	Deputation of Certain Departments, under the Executive Branch, Government Owned and Controlled Corporation and Financial Institutions, in connection with the May 10, 2004 National and Local Elections
6520	Rules and Regulations Implementing R.A. 9006 otherwise known as the Fair Election Act in relation to the May 10, 2004 National and Local Elections
6584	In the matter of Implementing Certain Prohibitive Acts embodied in Resolution No. 6520 re Fair Election Act
6628	Guidelines for Mass Media Accreditation in connection with the May 10, 2004 National and Local Elections and Subsequent Elections
6634	Rules and Regulations Governing Public Works Ban and Release, Disbrusement and expenditure of public funds in connection with the May 10, 2004 National and Local Elections
6643	Rules on the Liquor Ban in connection with the May 10, 2004 National and Local Elections
6667	General Instruction for the BEI in the Counting of Votes in connection with the May 10, 2004 National and Local Elections
6669	General Instruction for Municipality/City/Provincial/District Boards of Canvassers (BOC) in connection with the May 10, 2004 Elections
6629	Rules and Regulations on Foreign Observers in connection with the May 10, 2004 National and Local Elections
7213	Rules and Regulations Governing the Electoral Contribution and Expenditures in connection with the May 10, 2004 National and Local Elections

Let the Executive Director implement this resolution and the Education and Information Department cause the publication hereof in two (2) newsppapers of general circulation.

SO ORDERED.

BENJAMIN S. ABALOS, SR.
Chairman

RUFINO S. B. JAVIER
Commissioner

MEHOL K. SADAIN
Commissioner

(On Official Business)
RESURRECCION Z. BORRA
Commissioner

FLORENTINO A. TUASON, JR.
Commissioner

(On Official Business)
VIRGILIO O. GARCILLANO
Commissioner

MANUEL A. BARCELONA, JR.
Commissioner

(PDI - May 12, 2005)

NOTICE TO THE PUBLIC

LITA EUSEBIO

Dagupan City, April 12, 2005. The Municipal Trial Court, Branch 2, this City convicted today Lita Eusebio, a former cashier of Nazareth General Hospital of five counts of estafa.

Finding Eusebio guilty of abstracting various sums of money on different occasions in September, 1997, Judge Edgardo M. Caldona sentenced her to an imprisonment of two years and four month in each of two separate cases, and one year eight months imprisonment in each of the three other cases. Eusebio was also ordered to pay the hospital the collections that she misappropriated.

Eusebio, has several other similar pending estafa cases filed against her by Nazareth General Hospital before the Regional and Municipal Trial Courts in Dagupan City.

Criminal Case Nos.
40977, 40978, 40979, 40982, 40984

(PDI–May 12, 2005)

Supreme Court
Committee on Halls of Justice – Bids and Awards Committee

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

The Supreme Court invites contractors to apply for eligibility and to bid for the repair and rehabilitation of the Morong, Rizal Hall of Justice and the waterproofing of the concrete gutter of the Quezon City Hall of Justice.

The approved budget for the contract is **P2,750,000.00** to be sourced from the Judiciary Development Fund.

The list of eligibility requirements may be obtained from the Committee on Halls of Justice-Secretariat, 7/F Centennial Bldg., Supreme Court, Padre Faura St., Ermita, Manila.

Interested bidders are advised to take note of the following schedules:

Issuance of List of Eligibility Requirements	13 to 20 May 2005
Submission of Eligibility Requirements	26 May 2005, 1:30 pm Old Session Hall, Supreme Court
Issuance of Bid Documents (upon payment of a non-refundable amount of P1,000.00)	1 to 7 June 2005
Pre-Bid Conference	14 June 2005, 9:30 am Old Session Hall, Supreme Court
Submission and Opening of Bids	28 June 2005, 9:30 am Old Session Hall, Supreme Court

Award shall be made to the bidder who submitted the lowest calculated and most responsive bid and who is post-qualified. Criteria for the eligibility check of the prospective bidders, examination and evaluation of bids and post-qualification and all matters relevant to this procurement shall be in accordance with Republic Act No. 9184 and its IRR.

For additional information, contact Atty. Peter John Javier or Engr. Arnold Faradero at (02) 552-9589 to 94 or send an e-mail to chojbac@yahoo.com.

The Supreme Court reserves the right to reject any or all bids or offers which it may consider to be disadvantageous and not beneficial to the Court or to waive any defect or informality therein.

12 May 2005.

(Sgd.) **CHRISTOPHER O. LOCK**
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(PDI–May 12, 2005)

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PUBLIC NOTICES

ANNOUNCEMENT

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN THAT STOCK CERT. NO. 0031 ISSUED BY BATULAO GOLF & MOUNTAIN RESORT, INC. FOR ONE (1) SHARE OF ITOCHU CORPORATION HAS BEEN DECLARED LOST, IF NO CONTEST IS RECEIVED NEW CERTIFICATE WILL BE ISSUED.(PDI APR. 28, MAY 5, 12, 2005)

ANNOUNCEMENT
Notice is hereby given to MR. ALBINO D. RODRIGUEZ of Block 5 Lot 5, Bonanza Phase IV, a member beneficiary of Bonanza Phase IV Dwellers Association (BPDA) of Parang, Marikina City who abandoned his obligation to the association and to the NHMFC to report immediately to BPDA.
Mr Jaime C Mariangit
President - Bonanza Phase IV Dwellers Assn
(PDI - May 5 & 12, 2005)

AUCTION SALE

Victory Pawnshop at 45 Bonifacio Market, Kalookan City will hold an auction sale of all expired items on May 23, 2005 at 10:00 AM Mr. Vicente Zamora - Auctioneer

Virra Mall Pawnshop at 63 Level B Shoppesville Arcade, Greenhills, San Juan will hold an auction sale of all expired items on May 23, 2005 at 11:00 A.M. Mr. Vicente Zamora - Auctioneer

LEGAL NOTICE

Notice is herby given that the estate of Domingo Yambao was extrajudicially settled among his heirs per Doc. No. 22, Page No. 5, Book No. 189, Series of 2005 before Notary Public Atty. Ramiro Osorio of Quezon City.
(PDI-May 5, 12 & 19, 2005)

NOTICE OF LOSS

NOTICE OF LOSS
Notice is given that United Paragon Mining Corp. Stock Certificates No. 12094, 10835 & 9074, and Filinvest Land, Inc. Stock Certificate No. 67552 issued to MDR SECURITIES, INC., has been lost. If no contest is recieved new certificate will be issue. (PDI-May 12, 19, 26, 2005)

AUCTION

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ON: TUESDAY 17TH MAY 2005 - 10:30AM SHARP
PACKAGING MACHINERY; BOTTLING MACHINERY; ELECTRIC MOTORS, GEARS & PUMPS; COMPUTER NETWORKING & ACCESSORIES; OFFICE FURNITURE & EQUIPMENT; MISCELLANEOUS

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National Food Authority provincial manager for Negros Occidental Pablito Gemarino (foreground, left) is shown as he inspects part of the 120,000 bags of rice imported by the government from Vietnam. The volume, shipped into the country aboard MV My Hung at the Bredco Port in Bacolod City, will augment the local rice inventory in Negros Occidental.

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Former President of LBC Development Bank
November 18, 1935 - May 9, 2005

Who joined his Creator at the age of 69.

His body lies in state at Cosmopolitan Funeral Homes
Nivel Hills, Lahug, Cebu City.

Interment will be on May 14, 2005 at Consolacion, Cebu.

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Jesus said, "I am the resurrection and life. He who believes in Me will live, though he dies."

Our Dearly Beloved

Engr. Isauro B. De Jesus

September 28, 1921 – May 9, 2005

His loving wife **NENE**, children **JOJO & +EMILY, CELYNN & GAS, FRANK & ERNA, DON & JANE, JOJI & RENCHI, MARIFE & RANDY**, grandchildren, **Ginger, Shane, Bumper, Carrie, Angel, Nate, Tricia, Kenney, Grace, Jd, Ian, Hannah, Ezra, Elijah, River & Cleone**, great grandchildren, **Veronica, Ethan & Victoria**, brothers, sisters and in-laws, would like to thank precious loved ones and friends who are sympathizing and rejoicing with them for his peaceful homegoing to be with his Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ, forever.

Memorial services are on Thursday, May 12 and Friday, May 13, 2005 at 8:00 p.m., at the Presidential Suite, Loyola Memorial Chapel, Guadalupe, Makati City.

His body will be laid to rest on Saturday, May 14, 2005, 9:30 a.m. at Heritage Park, Fort Bonifacio, Makati City.

ATTY. LOURDES DOREEN DIONISIO

AGE : 51
BORN : OCTOBER 3, 1953
DIED : MAY 9, 2005

Her remains were cremated at 5:00 p.m. on May 10, 2005 at Heritage Memorial Park, Fort Bonifacio, Taguig. A mass will be celebrated for her at 7:00 p.m. tomorrow at Sacred Heart Church, Dao Street, San Antonio Village, Makati City.

Our Dearly Beloved

+ Leoncio Bugarin Dalluay, Sr.

Of Dalluay Memorial Service

Peacefully joined our Lord on May 8, 2004 at the age of 75.

His wife Lorena; loving children, Rudy & Hennie, Solly & Rudy, Emy & Tess, Lilian & Nanding, Thess & Ed, Vicky & Ogie, and JR & Annie; grandchildren; greatgrandchild; brothers & sister; relatives & friends request the readers to pray for the eternal repose of his soul.

His remains lie in state at Dalluay Memorial Chapel, Mabayuan, Olongapo City

Interment will be on Sunday, May 15, 2005 at Ilwas Cemetery, Subic, Zambales

---

One short sleep past, we wake eternally,
And death shall be no more...
(from "Death Be Not Proud" by John Donne)

LOURDES DE VEYRA SEVILLA

Peacefully joined our Lord and her husband
***EXEQUIEL S. SEVILLA** on May 10, 2005*
at the age of 94.

Her stepchildren **JOSIE, TONGIE, EDDIE, ERNIE, SILVIA** and **AIDA** and their spouses **LETY TAN, RORIE ASINAS, GLORIA ROMERO** and **PETER ENFIELD**; her step grandchildren, step great granddaughter; relatives, friends and former students request your prayers for the eternal repose of her soul.

Her remains lie in state at the Chapel of the Assumption College, San Lorenzo Village, Makati City.

After the 8:30 a.m. Holy Mass on Friday, May 13 at the Assumption College Chapel, interment will take place at the crypt of Our Lady of Mount Carmel Church in Quezon City where her parents, U.S. Resident Commissioner Jaime C. de Veyra and Sofia Reyes de Veyra, rest in peace.

NESTOR SABIO PITAPIT

Died in the grace of our Lord
on May 9, 2005 at the age of 47.

His sisters, **Marissa**, **Lilibeth**, **Maybel** and **Mayette** and brother **Ronilo**; brothers-in-law **Tony**, **Cesar** and **Richard**, sister-in-law **Judy**; nieces and nephews and other relatives request the pious readers to pray for the eternal repose of his soul.

His remains lie in state at Chapel 3A of Nacional Memorial Homes, Araneta Avenue, Quezon City, until May 14, 2005.

Interment will be on May 14, 2005 after the 8:00 a.m. Mass at Nacional Memorial Homes. Burial will follow at Himlayang Pilipino Memorial Park in Tandang Sora, Quezon City.

OFELIO CASAUAY PABLO

(April 2, 1946 - May 5, 2005)
of Tuguegarao City, Cagayan

Peacefully joined our Lord on May 5, 2005
at the age of 59.

His children **Christopher**, **Christine**, **Chrisellee**, **Christostomo** and **Chrisandra**, and grandchildren **Hanna Pablo**, **Maru Pablo**, **Kevin Hardegger**, **Glenn Baltensperger** and **Gregory Fuchs**, request relatives and friends to pray for the eternal repose of his soul.

His remains lie in state at the Babaran Memorial Chapel, Tuguegarao City.

Interment will be on Friday, May 13, 2005, at the Tuguegarao Memorial Park after the 7:00 a.m. Mass at the St. Peter's Cathedral, Tuguegarao City.

MARCELA PORTUGAL CUENCA

Peacefully joined her Creator and her husband VICENTE, on May 10, 2005
at the age of 106.

Her children **Clara** (†), **Paz**, **Rosie**, **Edeng**, **Eging**, **Conching** (†), **Ceny** (†), **Tino** (†), **Kiko** (†), **Totoy** (†), **Rene** (†), **Virgilio**, **Lito**, daughters-in-law, sons-in-law, grandchildren, great grandchildren, great-great grandchildren, relatives and friends request the pious readers to pray for the eternal repose of her soul.

Her remains lie in state at the Nativity of the Lord Parish Church, Ermin Garcia St., Cubao, Quezon City. Interment details will be announced later.

I am
the way,
the truth
and
the life.
No one
comes
to the
Father
except
through
Me.

John 14:6

IN MEMORIAM

MANUEL CONFESOR PADUA

December 15, 1921 – May 10, 2005

His bereaved wife, **Albine Hidalgo Padua**; children **Valerie** and **Rene Garcia**; grandchildren **George**, **Anna Regina** and **Michael Salgado** and **Katrina Mae**; great-grandchild **Patricia Therese**; brothers **Johnny** (†) and **Jean**, **Antonio** (†), **Benny** and **Bella** and the family of **Augusto** and **Julia Dayrit Hidalgo**, request the pious reader to pray for the eternal repose of his soul.

His remains lie in state at Funeraria Paz, Manila Memorial Park, Sucat, Parañaque City. Interment will be on Saturday, May 14, 2005, after the 8:00 a.m. Mass.

RAUL ESTANISLAO JOCSON

Peacefully joined the Lord
on May 6, 2005 at the age of 41.

His remains lie in state at INT #110 Amang Rodriguez Ave., Santolan, Pasig City.

Interment will be on Thursday, May 12, 2005 at Loyola Memorial Park, Marikina City after the 2:00 p.m. Mass at San Antonio de Padua Parish.

"For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish but have everlasting life."

John 3:16

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1598 M. H. del Pilar corner Dr. J. Quintos Streets, Malate, Manila
Tel. Nos. 522-0000; 526-0100 connecting all departments

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

The Land Bank of the Philippines invites interested suppliers who are (a) duly licensed Filipino citizens/sole proprietorships; or (b) 60% Filipino owned partnerships/corporations; or (c) two or more suppliers forming into joint ventures jointly and severally liable; or (d) cooperatives duly registered with the CDA; with largest single contract, similar to the items for bid, for the last 2 years, at least equal to 50% of the approved budget; and with Net Financial Contracting Capacity (NFCC) at least equal to the approved budget, to apply for eligibility and to bid for the following items:

ITB No.	Item / Description	Approved Budget	Source of Funds
2005-107	244 units Document Scanner	P 25,056,360.00	LBP Funds
2005-122	100 units Automated Teller Machines (ATMs)	71,184,300.00	LBP Funds
	Plus: Four (4)-Year Maintenance Package (inclusive of cost on labor, parts and incidental charges for travel, lodging, repair and quarterly preventive Software/Hardware Maintenance) - Renewable every year	12,996,156.40	LBP Funds
2005-126	566 pcs. 14K Gold Ring for 15 Years Service Awardees	3,300,850.00	LBP Funds

Bidding of the above requirements is scheduled on **June 8, 2005 at 1:00 p.m.** and the Bid Documents may be obtained from the Procurement Division of the General Services Department, 25th Floor, LANDBANK Plaza, M. H. del Pilar corner Dr. Quintos Streets, Malate, Manila, **upon payment of a non-refundable fee of P3,000.00, P10,000.00 and P1,000.00 for ITB Nos. 2005-107, 2005-122 and 2005-126, respectively.**

Interested suppliers are requested to attend the Pre-Bid Conference scheduled on **May 19 and 20, 2005** at the 25th Floor, Conference Room, LANDBANK Plaza, Malate, Manila.

All particulars relative to the **Qualification/Eligibility, Bid Bond, Performance Bond, Pre-bid Conference, Bid Evaluation and Award of Contract** shall be governed by the provisions of **RA 9184 and its Implementing Rules and Regulations.**

Only those bidders who comply with the Bank's requirements shall be eligible to participate in the bidding.

LANDBANK reserves the right to reject any or all bids, to declare the bidding a failure or waive any defect or informality and to accept bids as may be considered most advantageous to the Bank.

COMMITTEE ON BIDS AND AWARDS

(PDI–May 5 & 12, 2005)

ASIAN DEVELOPMENT BANK

P.O. Box 789, Manila, Philippines
6 ADB Avenue, Mandaluyong City, Philippines
Tel. Nos. 632 4231, 632 4444; Fax No. 636 2577
Email: dmunoz@adb.org or cpsoriano@adb.org

INVITATION for BID

(Contract No. ADB/OAS-2005/012)
Provision, Configuration and Installation of Audiovisual System for OER's Briefing Theater

1. The Asian Development Bank (ADB), a multilateral development finance institution headquartered in Manila, Philippines, wishes to receive bids from bidders for the provision, configuration and installation of audiovisual system for Office of External Relations Briefing Theater at ADB Headquarters, No. 6 ADB Avenue, Mandaluyong City, Philippines .
2. The Contractor shall provide ADB as part of their bids detailed systems block diagrams as well as a detailed list of the required equipment and their accessories for the most reliable and efficient integrated audio visual system. The bid shall include a multimedia projector system, sound system, Crestron remote control system and installation and commissioning. The complete details of equipment will be provided to interested bidders
3. The Contract may only be awarded to companies who meet the following criteria:
    - i. Legal existence as a validly registered company for a minimum of 3 years; joint ventures are eligible provided each partner to the partnership have a legal existence as a validly registered company for a minimum of 3 years;
    - ii. Must have extensive experience in the field of audiovisual systems and/or related field and have done similar projects for the last 3 years;
    - iii. Must have a generally sound financial and credit position;
    - iv. Is not under a declaration or record of ineligibility for corrupt and/or fraudulent practices issued or kept by ADB.
4. Bid documents may be obtained from the Procurement and Contracts Administration Section, Institutional Services Division, Office of Administrative Services, Room 1630 South, ADB Building, No. 6 ADB Avenue, Mandaluyong City, from **11- 16 May 2005** on any working day between 9:00 am and 4:00 pm. For inquiries, please call Mr. D. Munoz at 632 4231; fax no. 636 2567; email: dmunoz@adb.org or cpsoriano@adb.org.
5. A pre-bid meeting will be held at **2:00 pm on 16 May 2005** at Conference Room 1614 South of the Asian Development Bank Building, at the above given address, to brief bidders on the scope of goods/services and answer inquiries on ADB's requirements.
6. Two copies (marked "ORIGINAL and "COPY") of the technical and financial bids should be submitted each in a sealed envelope marked "Provision, Configuration and Installation of Audiovisual System for OER's Briefing Theater" addressed to the attention of OIC, Procurement and Contracts Administration Section, Institutional Services Division, Office of Administrative Services not later than **10:00 a.m. on 23 May 2005**. The bids should be sent by courier mail or hand-carried and deposited in the bid box provided by ADB, located adjacent to the Reception Desk at the main entrance of the ADB Headquarters Building.
7. This invitation does not entail any commitment on the part of ADB, either financial or otherwise. Any cost of preparation of bid shall be borne solely by the bidder. ADB reserves the right to accept or reject any bid.

CÉCILE L.H.F. GREGORY
Chairperson
Institutional Procurement Committee
Office of Administrative Services

(PDI–May 11, & 12, 2005)

Asian Development Bank ADB
FIGHTING POVERTY IN ASIA AND THE PACIFIC

PGMA visits NFA warehouse rice supply

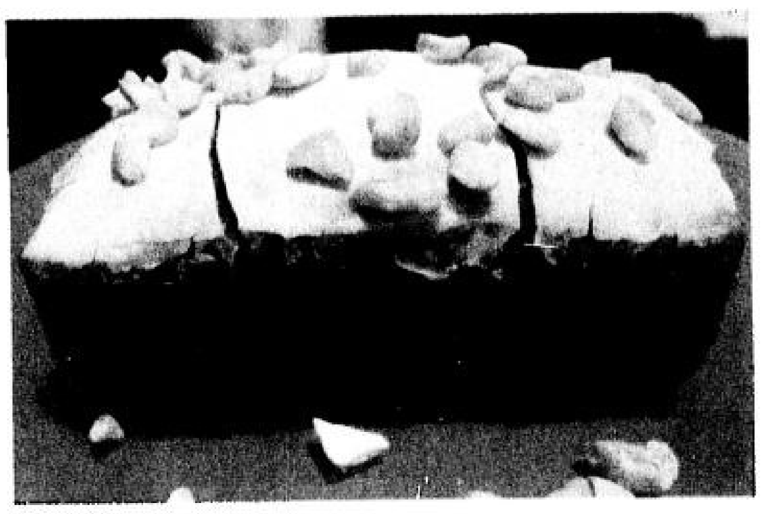
PRESIDENT Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo visited the Uniden warehouse of the National Food Authority in Taguig to assess availability of the government rice at the start of the lean production months. The President was briefed by NFA officials headed by Administrator Gregorio Y. Tan on the agency's distribution strategies for the lean months which starts in July until September. From Uniden, the President, with Secretray Yap and Administrator Tan, proceeded to the former Baseco compound in Tondo to witness the actual selling of rice and other basic commodities of the food agency's rolling store outlets deployed in the area. In Metro Manila alone, the NFA has existing 29 units of rolling stores deployed in depressed and crowded barangays in Metro Manila and Cavite area. Of this number, 10 units are deployed in the Central District Office; 6 units in the North District Office; 5 units in the South District Office; 4 units in the East Distrct Office; and 4 units in the Cavite area. President Arroyo also went to see the Gawad Kalinga project in the area and was briefed on the housing project in Baseco by Mayor Lito Atienza.

LIFESTYLE

For feedback, e-mail us at lifestyle@inquirer.com.ph
Text us your feedback:
inquirer life name/age/city/message to
2207 (Globe) or 283 (Smart)

Editor Chelo Banal-Formoso

DUNKIN' DONUTS
Slabsters
PEANUT BUTTER FLAVORED TREAT WITH SPRINKLES OF RICE CRISPIES



CARROT cake

It's just a sexy piece of cake

THE SEXY CHEF CREW. Barni and Rachel Alejandro with pastry chef Nina Navarro

Sexy Chef now offers South Beach Diet desserts

Text by Anne A. Jambora
Photos by Roger Carpio

BROKE up with your boyfriend? Having that time of the month? Call the Sexy Chef. Finally, you can have your cake, and eat it, too," says Barni Alejandro of Sexy Chef, Metro Manila's first reasonably priced South Beach Diet (SBD) menu, a company she owns and manages with celebrity sister, Rachel Alejandro.

Realizing a dearth in the market for low-calorie, low-fat and sugar-free desserts, the health-conscious sisters decided to expand their business by coming out with cookies and pastries that both say don't taste like anything diet. In fact, the sisters enthusiastically say consumers wouldn't know the difference between the diet and the "real" thing even if they were blindfolded.

"We do have a chocoholic friend who rates our desserts. If she says it tastes like a diet dessert, we scrap the item," Barni says.

Since Barni already takes care of concocting appetizing SBD menu, and Rachel, the image model of this young company, is busy running after appointments, both have decided to take on a new "sister" in the kitchen. Besides, both admit that as a science, baking is best left to a pro—and she's a very young and passionate pro at that.

'Sweets' lady

Meet Nina Navarro, Sexy Chef's youthful pastry chef who works till late in the evening to perfect her creation of "sweets" that shouldn't taste anywhere near healthy—that flat, dull and sawdust-like consistency the public has come to associate with diet desserts. (Since the sisters are still doing the final touches of their new place, both are working in the kitchen of Alejandro's grandmother in Marikina. Barni works in the day, and Navarro starts whipping up her ingredients in the evening.

"As much as we needed the expertise of a person who has been working with pastries, we also wanted someone young, someone who has a lot of fresh ideas," says Rachel.

And that's exactly what Navarro brought into the company. She may be a seasoned chef in the world of limitless butter and fat and sugar dripping with layers upon layers of rich chocolate, but mixing healthy ingredients for a decent diet dessert is a completely different story.

And decent won't do either. There's already too much of those ordinary, palatable sugar-free desserts in the market today. The Alejandros wanted fantastic treats that can satisfy even the picky sweet tooth of diabetics.

"It has been very challenging so far. You have to adjust working with low-fat ingredi-

IT'S JUST/ C3

OREO cheesecake

PEANUT butter and chocolate chip cookies

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BANGUS Embotido from Kyowa Rice Cooker

SWEET and Savory Brisket from Kyowa Slow Cooker

GRILLED Stuffed Tilapia from Kyowa Convection Oven

Fiesta recipes

YOU may need to remember just one word as you prepare for all the partying this fiesta time.

Kyowa has a rice cooker, slow cooker, electric griller and convection oven, suitable for most of your favorite fiesta dishes.

The Kyowa Rice Cooker does not only cook the rice but can also be used for *dimsum* and *embotido*. Or you can use it to do risotto dishes or even rice-based desserts.

If you have Kyowa's Slow Cooker, try making Sweet and Savory Brisket for something different.

Another handy tool to keep around is Kyowa's Electric Griller that allows you to cook food even an hour before guests arrive.

You can also whip up a number of surprises with your Kyowa Convection Oven like turbo broiled whole chicken or Grilled Stuffed Tilapia.

Use your Kyowa to do this:

Bangus Embotido

(Use Kyowa Rice Cooker.)
1 c bangus fillet
1 pc large onion, chopped
¼ c raisins
1 pc pork bouillon cube
1 small can freshcut crushed pineapple, drained
1 pc medium red bell pepper, diced
1 pc medium carrot, coarsely grated
1 egg
1 stalk celery, chopped
¼ c flour
salt
pepper

Marinate fish in pineapple syrup, ½ tsp iodized fine salt (or ½ tbsp iodized rock salt) and ¼ tsp pepper for 10 minutes. Drain. Discard marinade.

Chop fish then combine with remaining ingredients. Season with ¾ tsp iodized fine salt (or ¾ tbsp iodized rock salt) and ¼ tsp pepper. Divide into 3.

Wrap in foil then roll. Steam in Kyowa Rice Cooker for 40 minutes. Cool. If desired, brown all sides in oil. Slice and serve with ketchup.

Sweet and Savory Brisket

(Use Kyowa Slow Cooker.)
1 beef brisket (about 1 k), cut in half
1 c ketchup
¼ c grape jelly
1 envelope onion soup mix
½ tsp pepper

Place half of the brisket in a Kyowa Slow Cooker.

In a bowl, combine the ketchup, jelly, soup mix and pepper; spread half over meat. Top with the remaining meat and ketchup mixture.

Cover and cook on low heat from 8 to 10 hours or until meat is tender. Slice brisket. Serve with cooking juice.

Grilled Stuffed Tilapia

(Use Kyowa Convection Oven.)
2 k *tilapia*
2 tbsp iodized salt
1 tsp black pepper, ground
½ c tomato, diced
¼ c onion, sliced
1 c coconut cream
banana leaves

Blend spices and seasoning. Season fish inside and out. Cover, label and marinate for 2 hours inside the chiller.

Combined diced tomatoes, onions and coconut cream for stuffing.

Stuff into the marinated fish.

Heat banana leaves.

Wrap stuffed fish in banana leaves.

Tie to secure the wrapper.

Grill wrapper dish until fully cooked or cook in a Kyowa Convection Oven at high heat.

Simple solutions to kitchen problems

DOES the state of your kitchen make you glad or mad? Don't let simple kitchen problems grow into full-blown household crises. Turn kitchen boohoos into yahoos with a little help from Glad, the trusted name in kitchen wraps and bags.

Lonely leftovers. Don't let your family endure the same leftover dishes at breakfast, lunch and dinner. Get creative and transform last night's entrées into tasty, new dishes. But first, you have to preserve the flavor of leftovers by storing foods like roasted chicken or smoked salmon in super-strength Glad Aluminum Foil or extra-stretch Glad Cling Wrap. Then re-use the entrée by preparing a holiday club sandwich or using the leftover as empanada filling.

From grilled foods to steamed cuisine, tired meals become appetizing 're-purposed entrees' using Glad products.

Smells fishy. Do you notice a weird odor coming out of your refrigerator? There's cause for alarm when the watermelon tastes fishy and your drinking water smells like yesterday's dinner. What you have to do: store raw meats and seafood in separate Glad Zipper Freezer Bags, and other foodstuffs like fruits and vegetables in Glad Zipper Storage Bags that keep food fresh longer. These bags seal tightly to protect food from bacteria and contamination, and prevent food odors from mixing in the refrigerator. Glad Zipper Freezer Bags even have a write-on label so you can easily tell what's inside the bag.

Storage trouble. Having trouble keeping food fresh? Rethink your storage strategy. Refrigerate or freeze perishables, prepared foods and leftovers within two hours or sooner using tight-sealing, sturdy GladWare. Divide large amounts of leftovers into small, shallow containers for quick cooling in the refrigerator. GladWare is perfect for this task because it's available in three sizes. What's more, you can make a neat stack of GladWare in the fridge without fear of breaking; these containers are not brittle–they don't break or tear easily.

Messy cleanups. Tired of removing debris from pans and scrubbing grease off your bakeware? Next time, use Glad Bake to line your pan instead of brushing oil or butter on it. Glad Bake ensures no-stick cakes and pastries so you never ever have to deal with burnt or sticky baking pans again. And it's cost-effective because you can reuse the sheet for another baking project!

Trash crash. Grossed out by garbage? Take waste management seriously so you don't invite ants and flies into your living space. Place the day's rubbish in a mess-free Glad Kitchen Garbage Bag. There won't be any unpleasant spill-outs because the bag is sturdier and is designed to have more space for trash.

Glad products prolong the storage life of leftover dishes, fresh fruits, vegetables and meats while helping homemakers deal with common kitchen problems easily and more efficiently. Durable, convenient and practical, Glad kitchen wraps, bags and containers are available in leading supermarkets nationwide.

Portuguese, Spanish cooking classes

THE REGGIE Aspiras School of Culinary Arts is conducting the following classes:

May 13—Portuguese 101 (all new): Clam Stew, Piri Piri Chicken, Portuguese Roast Pork with Bean and *Chorizo* Stew and Homemade Farmers Bread, Baked Seabass Portuguese Style, Flan

May 14—Gourmet Stuffed Lechon Manok: *Adobo* Rice Stuffed *Lechon Manok*, *Achuete*, *Kalamansi* Basted *Lechon Manok* with Paella Stuffing, *Bawang* Roast with *Quesong Puti* and Ricotta Stuffing, Salt and Pepper *Lechon Manok* with *Saba* Stuffing, *Lechon Manok* with *Dayap* Butter and Homemade Mayonnaise

May 16—Traditional Pinoy 3 (all new): Perfect *Bulalo* with Dipping Sauces and *Kinunot*, *Pritong Isda* with Homemade *Balao Balao*, *Guinatang Alimango sa Bayabas*, *Paksiw na Pata*, Crispy *Lechon Kawali* with Sauces, *Pucherong Dalag*

May 18—Exotic *Arrozes* and Paellas of Spain (all new): *Con Sardinas* with Pork Ribs and Squash, Negro with Mixed Seafood, Pork and Mushrooms, *con Pata*

Call 9289296, 9273008, 6335162, 6474744, 0917-8399888.

Free cooking demo

SAN MIGUEL Pure Foods Culinary Center invites you to "Learn, Cook and Earn," a free cooking demonstration with chef instructors Melanie Cruz and Anna Park of Cooking Basics Culinary Studio.

Widen your options and learn sumptuous, easy-to-prepare dishes fit for a food business on May 28, 1-4:30 p.m., at the San Miguel Head Office Cafeteria, 40 San Miguel Ave., Ortigas Center, Mandaluyong (across SM Megamall). Just bring in any three empty assorted wrappers of Magnolia, Purefoods-Hormel, Magnolia Chicken or Monterey products. Call 6719876 loc. 402, 404, 405 and 2771.

Learn new Japanese recipes

A JAPANESE Cooking Course will be conducted 2-6 p.m., May 17-19, by Maya Kitchen and chef Seiji Kamura.

The course will offer all new recipes like Chicken Saute in Anchovy Sauce, Japanese Hamburger Onion Sauce, Mixed Mushroom Omelet, Chicken Katsu with Cheese, Pumpkin Croquettes Tuna Gratin, Chicken Cream Stew, Rolled Cabbage with Meat Fish, Dry Curry Rice, Macaroni Salad, Steam Chicken Salad, Sweet and Sour Pork Japanese Style, Sautéed Pork and Cabbage with Miso, Ham and Potato Curry, Steamed Chicken with Goma Sesame Sauce, Japanese Fried Chicken, Japanese Meatball, Japanese Crab Omelet, Ground Beef with Lettuce Tsutsumi Wrap, Shrimp Wonton Soup Japanese Style, Grilled Tofu with Ground Pork.

Meanwhile, Waitering and Bartending classes will be held 9 a.m.-4 p.m., May 14 and 21. It will cover basic set-up, suggestive selling techniques, serving and bussing out, napkin folding and skirting, classification of wines and spirits, types of glasses, mixing and serving drinks.

Other classes offered are:

Young People's Cook-in for teens aged 11 and up, 9 a.m.-1 p.m., May 18 and 20. Participants will be taught basic cooking and baking techniques including food presentation and styling with edible garniture. Recipes include Three-cheese Lasagna, Frosted Ribbon Loaf, Apple Strudel, Cream Cheese Pie, Pumpkin Soup, Party Chicken Salad, Crusty Bread Bowl and Butter Raisin Loaf.

The Junior Culinary Workshop for boys and girls aged 6-10 will be held 8:30 a.m.-12 noon, May 17 and 19. Covered will be hygiene sanitation and safety in the kitchen, kitchen math, table setting and napkin folding. Recipes include Porcupine Fish Balls, Carbonara Bacon and Cream, Spaghetti Jigsaw Sandwiches, Banana Nog, Hotdog Hoagies, Chocolate Beehives and Mister Bean Bun.

Visit the Maya Kitchen (Tuesdays through Saturdays) at the 8/F Liberty Bldg., A. Arnaiz Ave. (Pasay Rd.), Makati City, or call 8921185 or 8925011 loc. 108; or e-mail mkitchen @ultimate.info.com.ph.

No-grill barbecue

ENJOY chicken barbecue anywhere anytime.

Chef Jun Jun de Guzman created this easy recipe exclusively for Lea & Perrins Worcestershire Sauce. You can make your marinade using ingredients found in any kitchen, and you don't need any charcoal.

Enjoy your barbecued chicken even more with the Lea & Perrins Catsup Dipping Sauce. Just add Lea & Perrins Worcestershire Sauce to your favorite catsup.

Lea & Perrins Worcestershire Sauce is another quality product of HP Foods Ltd. of the United Kingdom. Try other HP products such as HP Barbecue, HP Sauce and HP Chili.

Turbo Barbecued Chicken

1 whole chicken, cut into 12-14 pcs (about 1-1¼ k)
2/3 c brown sugar
¾ c soy sauce
2/3 c banana catsup
1½ tbsp minced garlic
1½ tbsp Lea & Perrins Worcestershire Sauce
¼ c *calamansi* juice, about 8-9 pcs

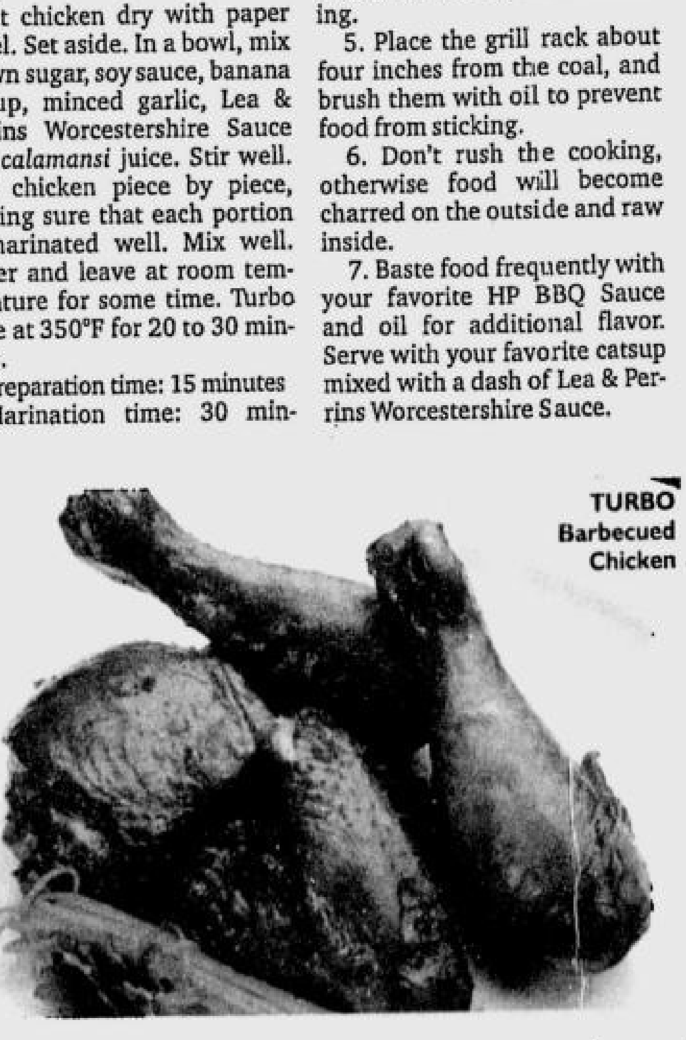
Pat chicken dry with paper towel. Set aside. In a bowl, mix brown sugar, soy sauce, banana catsup, minced garlic, Lea & Perrins Worcestershire Sauce and *calamansi* juice. Stir well. Add chicken piece by piece, making sure that each portion is marinated well. Mix well. Cover and leave at room temperature for some time. Turbo bake at 350°F for 20 to 30 minutes.

Preparation time: 15 minutes
Marination time: 30 minutes, minimum. May be frozen for a week.
Cooking time: 20-30 minutes
Serves 5-6 persons

Barbecue tips from HP BBQ Sauce:

Here are some effective ways to make your barbecue better from HP Barbecue Sauce, a quality product of HP Foods, Ltd., makers of Lea & Perrins Worcestershire Sauce.

1. Ideally, you should marinate meat for 24 hours. As that is not always possible, aim for at least eight hours. Vegetables need around 4-8 hours.
2. While meat and vegetables are marinating, try to turn the pieces over every now and then. Make sure you have all your barbecue bits and pieces—tongs, spatula, skewers, basting brush, lighter and plenty of coal.
3. Marinating is the key to tasty barbecued meat and vegetables. For marinade with an authentic and instant smokey flavor, try HP BBQ Sauce.
4. The charcoal should be glowing red with a little white ash on top when you start cooking.
5. Place the grill rack about four inches from the coal, and brush them with oil to prevent food from sticking.
6. Don't rush the cooking, otherwise food will become charred on the outside and raw inside.
7. Baste food frequently with your favorite HP BBQ Sauce and oil for additional flavor. Serve with your favorite catsup mixed with a dash of Lea & Perrins Worcestershire Sauce.



TURBO Barbecued Chicken

SAGE
NESTEA
Shakey's
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Great Pizza

V-LEAGUE PROMO
Shakey's V-League, the first semi-professional all-women's volleyball league in the Philippines, has inspired the V-League bundle. For P569, you get a delicious treat for three and a Shakey's V-League volleyball. Promo is available to all dine-in customers until May 31. Enjoy a double-sized helping of Classic Italian Sausage made with prime ground meat, seasoned with special herbs and spices and prepared the traditional way, absolutely without the use of extender. The thin crust brick-oven baked pizza is topped with aged cheddar cheese and special tomato sauce, and garnished with red bell peppers and onions. For delivery, dial 5338000.

All-natural fruit cooler

COOL off this summer with Seattle's Best Coffee's newest concoction, the Fruit Javakula. The beverage is 100-percent all-natural fruit, tea and milk, with a healthy blend of Vitamin C and protein and a fruity smoothie texture.

Enjoy Fruit Javakula's five exciting flavors—Strawberry Rave, Mango Tango, Peaches 'n Cream, Strawberry Bananarama and Wild Berry. They come with freshfruit skewers.

Visit the nearest Seattle's Best Coffee store and grab a glass of Fruit Javakula.

Meal combo in a tub

POPEYE'S Chicken and Seafood is now offering the meal combo Popeye's Tub.

Eight pieces of chicken are served with four regular signature side dishes (choices of red beans and rice, coleslaw, mashed potato or cajun rice), four pieces of buttermilk biscuits (or rice) and four regular sodas.

A tub filled with five pieces of chicken can be enjoyed with Popeye's Seafood Poppers in small servings of popcorn shrimp and squid rings. Other add-ons are four regular sodas, four cups of steamed rice and four regular signature side dishes.

The treats cost a budget-friendly P399, for a saving of P167.

Popeye's store is at Greenhills; Robinsons Galleria, Ermita and Metro East; New Farmers Plaza Cubao; and SM City Pampanga.

It's just a sexy piece of cake

From page C1

ents. The measurement is different and the consistency is not the same. I have hit and miss of about three times before I can come up with a delicious dessert," Navarro says.

Rigorous test

And that piece of cake still has to go through rigorous taste testing by the Alejandros and their friends. But for Navarro, however, it has been a welcome change.

For starters, whole-wheat flour is substituted for the standard flour. Cream cheese, if an item calls for it, must be one-third less fat. The more expensive but touted healthier sugar substitute, Splenda, is used instead of aspartame.

These three-inch desserts will be sold separately, about P95 per slice. A minimum order of P500 will entitle one for a free delivery—now delivering anywhere within the metropolis.

Three-inch slices are the industry standard. It also helps prevent one, says Rachel, from pigging out on the whole cake. For special occasions, whole cakes can be ordered. Delivery is within three days after placing an order.

Available for now are carrot cake, cheesecake, chocolate chip cookies, peanut butter cookies and flourless brownies. In the works are apple crisps and chocolate cake. Also available are the low-fat, sugar-free custard cakes and gelatins by Barni.

Soon, says Rachel, a Sexy Chef café will be set up, offering everything and anything sugar-free, low-fat and low-calorie, an alternative to the many dessert resto-cafés.

"Many Filipinos are diabetic, and they are getting younger these days. They can't deprive themselves of sweets for the rest of their lives," Rachel says.

Weight-watchers stand to gain as well. If the sugar-craving sets in, anyone can have his/her dessert minus the guilt. Moderation, cautions Rachel, is still the key to permanent weight loss. Through a delightful line of desserts, however, Sexy Chef hopes Filipinos won't shudder at the thought of eating healthy.

Call 0917-SXYCHEF, 0917-7992433 or 9335258.

E-mail the author at ajambora@inquirer.com.ph

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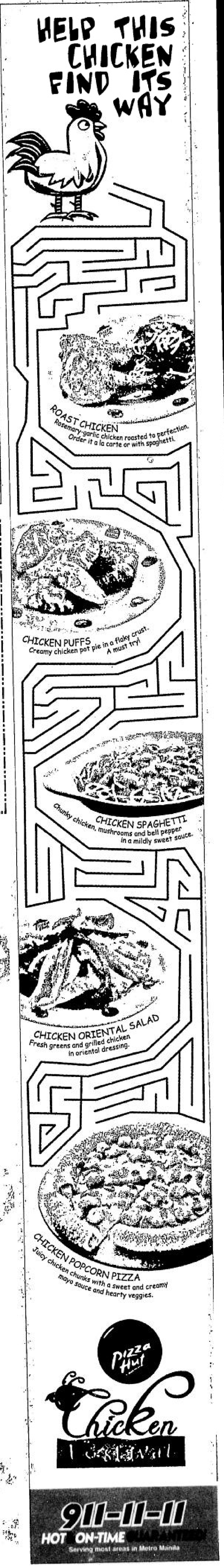
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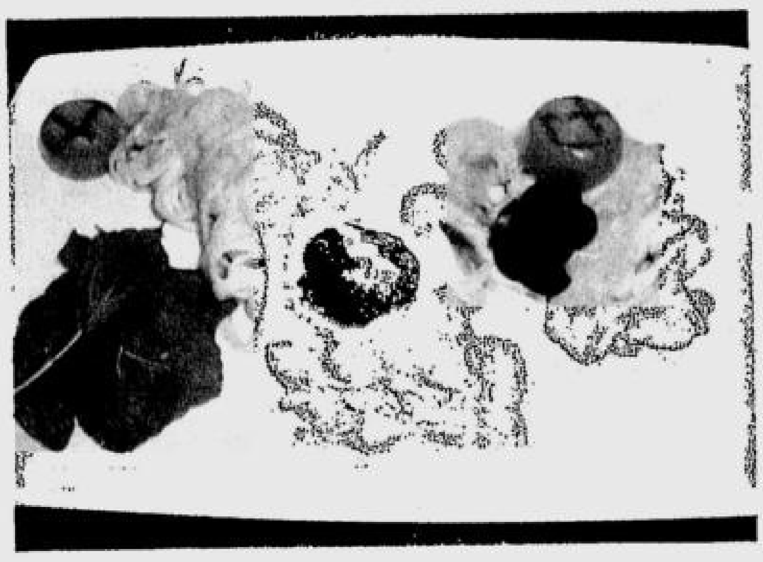
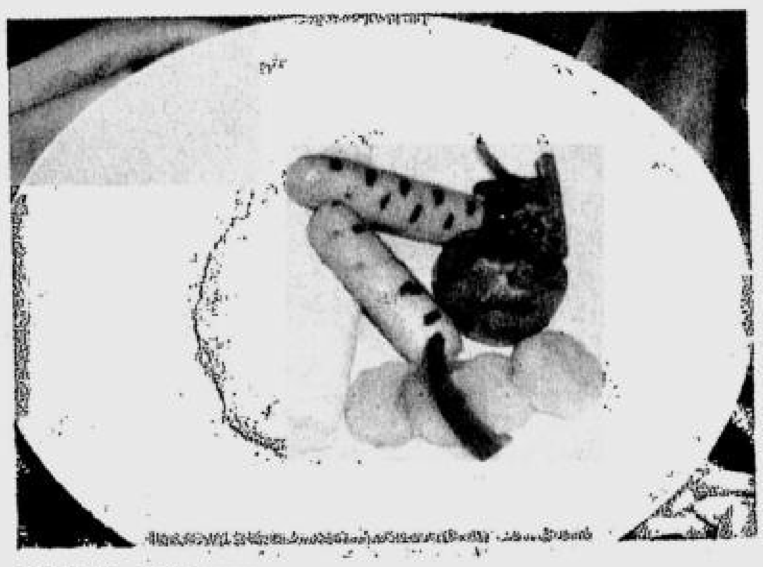

ORIENTAL Noodles with Shrimp


OMELET with Sausage

PAN-SEARED Lapu-Lapu

Fine dining service at 30,000 feet

By Vangie Baga-Reyes

GULF Air has taken onboard dining to new heights.

Its Sky Chef concept, launched recently in the Philippines, allows first class passengers to have their gourmet meal in style, the way they would have it in a restaurant on terra firma.

"With Sky Chef, it's like bringing a five-star hotel service up in the sky," proudly says Anders Schultz, Gulf Air manager for in-flight services. Gulf Air is the national carrier of Abu Dhabi, Bahrain and Oman.

A chef will have most of the food pre-cooked—at Miascor Catering Center in Pasay for flights from Manila. Then he or she will be onboard to plate the food for those in First Class, giving each passenger the feeling of more personalized service like in a luxurious hotel or restaurant.

The chef will also move around to get passengers' special requests and try to tailor-fit dishes according to the passenger's preferences. Steaks will be served rare or medium well, for instance, or eggs benedict without the hollandaise sauce.

To complement the gourmet meals, the Sky Cellar also offers a range of vintage wines, from Grand Cru St. Emilion to single vineyard Burgundy, as well as deluxe spirits.

Gulf Air is the only mid-Eastern airline to serve wine and champagne on board.

For the business class, the chefs will prepare an eight-course menu. Gulf Air has now over 100 onboard chefs.

"This service concept is intended to offer personalized attention and care that will exceed our customer's expectation," says Schultz. He adds that, as much as possible, Gulf Air's food service aims to come as close as possible to restaurant—quality dining, able to serve with elegance hot meals at 30,000 feet.

Gulf Air gave recently a preview of what was in store for its First Class passengers at the Miascor Catering Center. It brought in Sky chef Christophe Camacho, who prepared a spread consisting of traditional mid-Eastern fare with European and Asian influences.

Dishes prepared included Pumpkin Soup with Coconut Cream, Char-grilled Sirloin Sandwich with Caramelized Onion, Prawn with Lemongrass on Green Mango Salad, Stir-fried Vegetables with Noodles Nest and Lamb Kofta and Beef Tikka. Pastries included Black Cherry and Apple Charlotte, Arabic Coffee Tiramisu and Pineapple Lime Tartlette.

"Gulf Air is the only airline offering Sky Chef service...and it has won the Skytrax (the most prestigious award-giving body for air transport) Best Onboard Food for First Class for two years in a row," says Shultz.

Another privilege enjoyed by First Class and Business Class passengers is Dine on Demand that allows them to choose when they want to have their meal during the flight.

Sky Nanny

The airline also offers to passengers in all sections Sky Nanny, aimed to make life easier and more enjoyable for travelers with young children, including infants. The Nanny helps families during boarding and disembarkation and gives parents a much-needed break during longer flights.

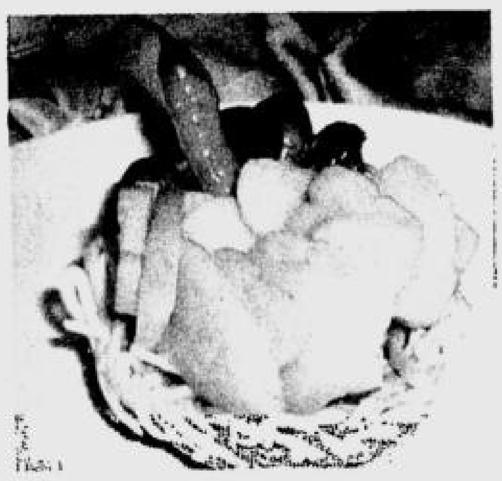
Children will be kept occupied with in-flight activities and entertainment (the airline offers two dedicated children's channels). Separate dining times can also be organized for children to let parents enjoy their own meals.

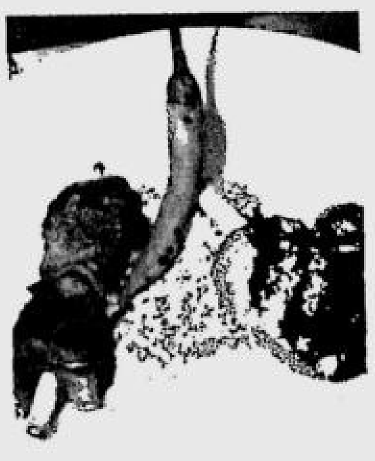
Schultz says every Sky Nanny is trained to care for children up to the age of 12, whether traveling with their parents or unaccompanied minors.

Gulf Air flies out of Manila nine times a week to Abu Dhabi, Bahrain and Muscat, with connections to different key cities in the Gulf, Europe and the Mediterranean. Call 8178383.

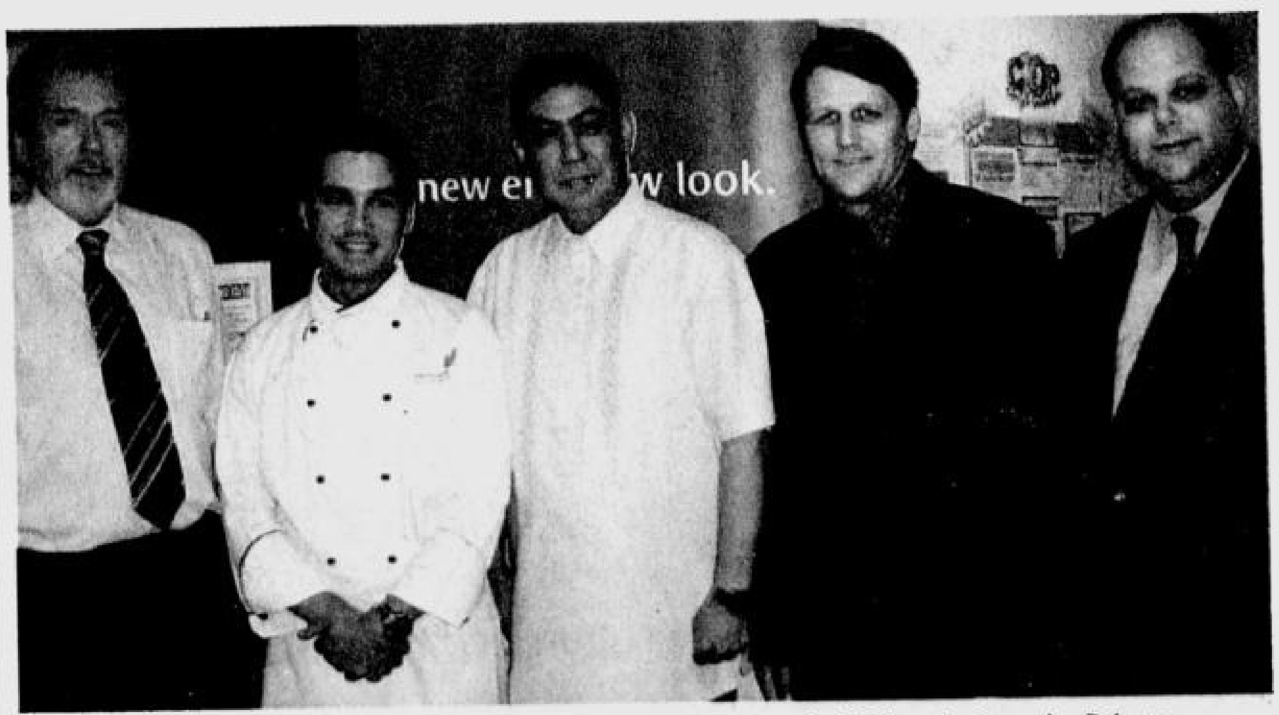
MIXED Salad with Asparagus, Red Pepper and Parmesan Tulle

BLACK Cherry and Apple Charlotte

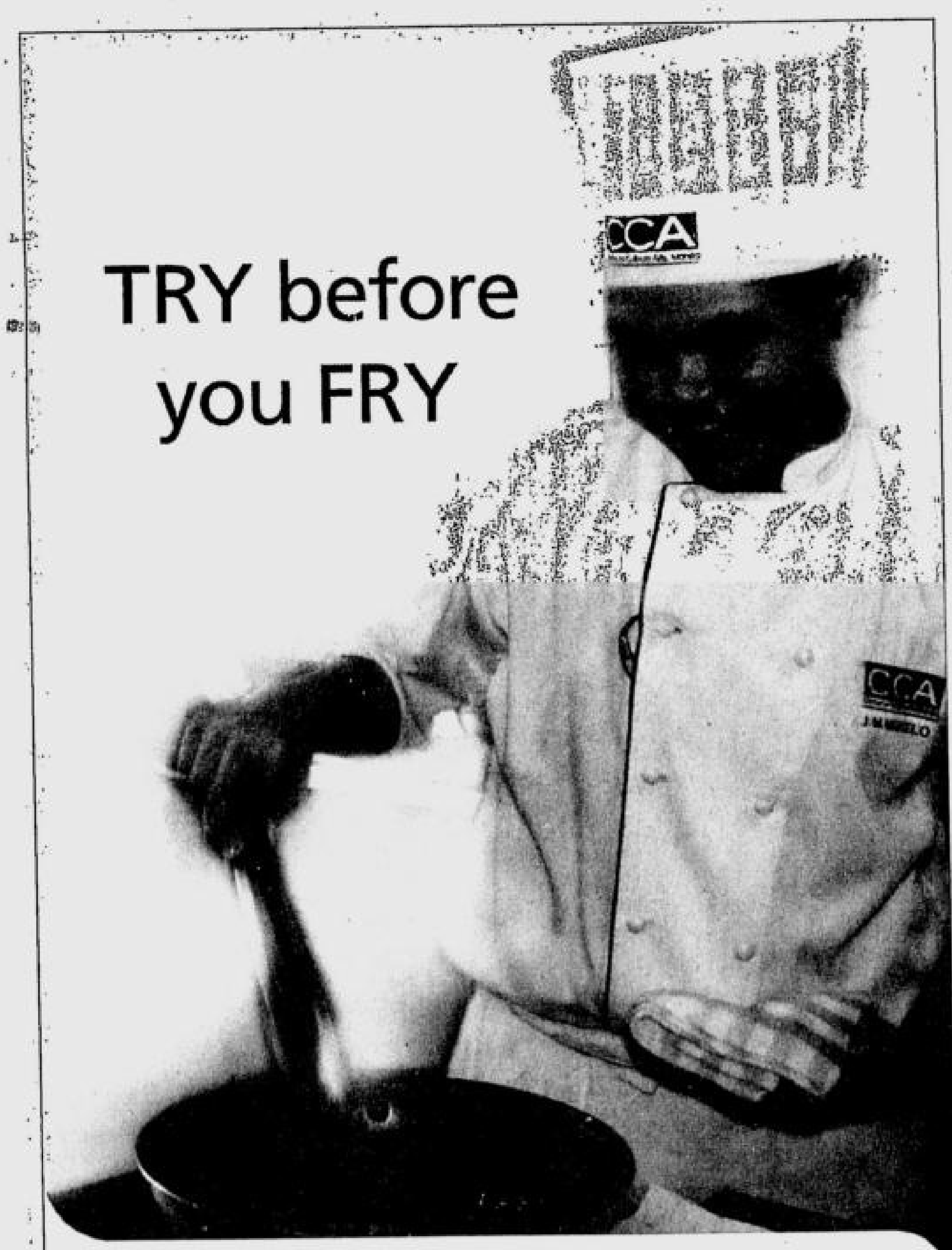

STIR-FRIED Veggies in Noodle Nest


LAMB Kofta and Beef Tikka

CHARGRILLED Sirloin Sandwich with Caramelized Onion



GULF AIR executives: John Verhelst, marketing manager for Asia Pacific; chef Christophe Camacho; Roberto Hukom, area manager for Philippines; Anders Schultz, manager for in-flight services; and Stephen Gervais, Miascor Catering general manager



The Center for Culinary Arts (CCA), Manila is the country's leading and longest running culinary school, having reaped numerous awards including Superbrands 2004 & 2005. This May, the school will hold the **Discovery Course**, an introductory program to its full-time courses:

- Diploma in Culinary Arts and Management
- Diploma in Baking-Pastry Arts and Management

You will get a complete overview including hands-on learning sessions. If you see yourself in this career, you may take one of these full-time courses with our experienced faculty and finish with a Government Accredited Diploma. You may even pursue a Bachelor Degree overseas with our partner schools in Canada and Australia. You will also get a US National Restaurant Association ProMgt® Certification, an advantage for work in the USA. Try out a future in culinary arts. Sign up for the Discovery Course at CCA, Manila.

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Binondo: 422 Lavezares St. corner Caballeros Binondo, Manila Tel.# 245-9589

Their wish is my command

KITCHEN RESCUE

Reggie Aspiras

THIS is all about granting wishes and sharing new discoveries, the reasons I love doing Kitchen Rescue. A great weekend to you all!

I'm a stage 2 cancer patient who just finished chemo four months ago. I drink carrot juice daily and would like to make carrot cake, too. Can I use the pulp from the carrot juice? *Ilocana kasi tayo, sayang naman.*

ELIZABETH REVILLA

Anything to make you happy! Here's one of my favorite carrot cake recipes. This one comes with a white chocolate frosting. Please use fresh carrots and not the pulp left after juice extraction. That's *medyo* pushing it! Even us Ilokanas, should know when enough is enough...

1 c canola oil

1 c sugar

1 c firmly packed brown sugar

6 eggs

3 c grated carrot, about 3-4 carrots

2 c flour

1 tbsp ground cinnamon

2 tsp baking soda

¼ tsp salt

½ c pineapple chunks, drained

1 c mashed bananas, very ripe bananas for best results

1½ c toasted nuts (walnuts or pecans)

Pre-heat oven to 350°F.

In a mixing bowl, beat the first three ingredients for 10 minutes.

Add the eggs and beat for 5 minutes.

Combine flour, cinnamon, baking soda and salt. Sift over carrots and gently toss to coat. This ensures that the carrots don't form lumps in your batter.

Add in carrots and flour mixture.

Add in pineapple, bananas and nuts.

Pour into a 9x2 inch pan.

Bake 45 minutes, checking with a toothpick for doneness.

Frosting:

1 c cream cheese

¾ c powdered sugar

½ c butter, cubed

¼ c cream

200 g white chocolate, chopped (Chef's Nook-7245812, Santi's Deli or Chocolate Lover)- the nicer the white chocolate, the better the frosting

Beat cream cheese and sugar until smooth.

Add in butter, a little at a time. Beat until mixture is smooth and lump free.

In a saucepan, melt cream, turn off heat and add chocolates.

Beat chocolate and cream mixture until cool and slightly thick.

Fold into cream cheese mixture.

Frost over cake.

Polvoron recipe

I'm Merlinda Seraspe of CDO. *Magre*-request *po sana ako kung paano gumawa ng pulburon na maari kung i*-side line.

Good luck! Please don't forget me when you've become *Polvoron* Queen! An autographed photo will do! And, if you like to make this recipe but abhor the thought of molding it, I put mine in a bottle and eat it with a spoon!

2 ¾ c flour

3¼ c powdered milk

1½ c sugar

1½ c butter, melted

In a pan, toast flour until fragrant and toasted. Keep mixing the flour to avoid uneven toasting and burning. Color should be at least beige. How the flour is toasted will affect the general flavor of your *polvoron*, the more toasted it is, the nuttier the flavor. I like mine just slightly toasted. Cool mixture slightly.

Add the rest of the ingredients, mixing well until all flour grains are visibly coated in butter.

Mold or put in bottle.

Tips: If you want old-fashioned *polvoron*, use regular white sugar; if you want it smooth, use powdered sugar. The flavor of your *polvoron* will depend on the butter you use. The better the butter, the nicer the *polvoron*.

Same is true with your powdered milk. My *lola* used to make it with Klim and Nido. Feel free to experiment with different brands until you are happy with the results.

Boursin cheese

Do you have a recipe to transform cream cheese into anything like Boursin cheese? My favorite 4-year-old niece adores it but it's getting a little too costly. I would greatly appreciate your help so I can retain my status as favorite aunt.

LU

CAKE bouquet with gum paste flowers at P650! That's what I call being sanely Ilokana.

One favorite *tita* coming up!

1 package Philadelphia cream cheese

2 tsp garlic, pounded to a paste (or you may use 1 tbsp roasted garlic for a twist in flavor)

2 tsp each fresh basil, thyme and oregano (You may add other herbs if you wish. The total amount of fresh or dry herbs for this recipe is 2 tbsp. Other herbs to use are parsley and rosemary.)

Salt and freshly cracked black pepper to taste

Beat cream cheese until smooth and fluffy. Add the rest of the ingredients and beat until blended.

Line a ramekin or any small bowl with cling wrap, fill with cheese mixture. Press down and chill. Before serving, un-mold. Top with fresh chopped herbs or freshly cracked pepper if you wish. Serve with cracker.

Prepare 3 hours before serving to develop flavors.

Discoveries

Reasonable all-occasion cakes - Mrs. Reyes or Neneng, 9279159

One of my favorite chefs, Quito Jose of Brothers Burgers, now sells his burger patties. Pack of 5 at P100 and 10 for P200. Salcedo Park, Saturdays, or call 8121514, 8150736

The best *suha* I've ever tasted outside Bangkok was from one of my favorite people, Dr. Aye Nuiguid, Apple Jo Fruit Mart, Davao. They could mail your order, 082-3008066.

I am not a *duhat* person. Truth is I just like licking the sugar and salt coating the *duhat* after it is shaken. But those from the Tayags in Pampanga are a different story. Huge, plump, sweet and juicy! 045-8884224, 045-3223115.

I'm cooking Portuguese, Pinoy and paellas this week, call us at 9289296.

For questions and comments, text 0917-8399888.

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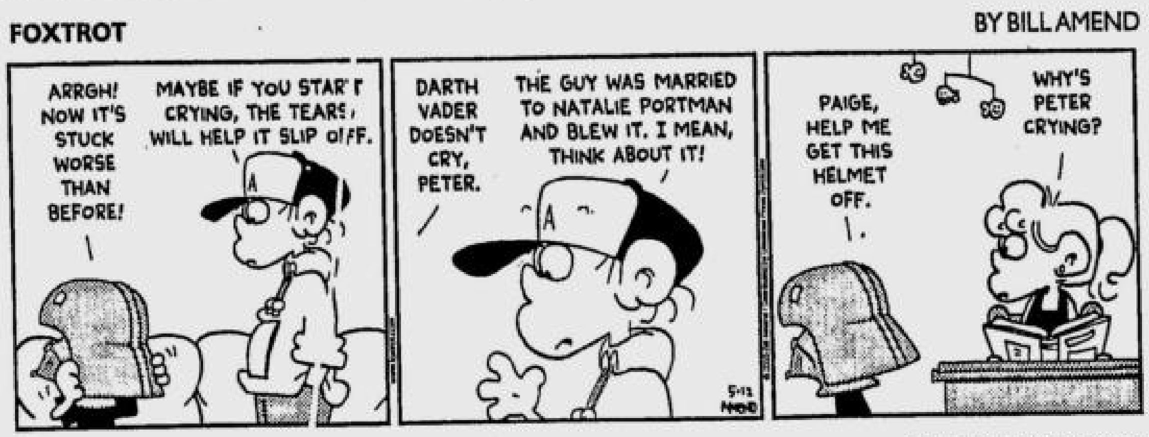
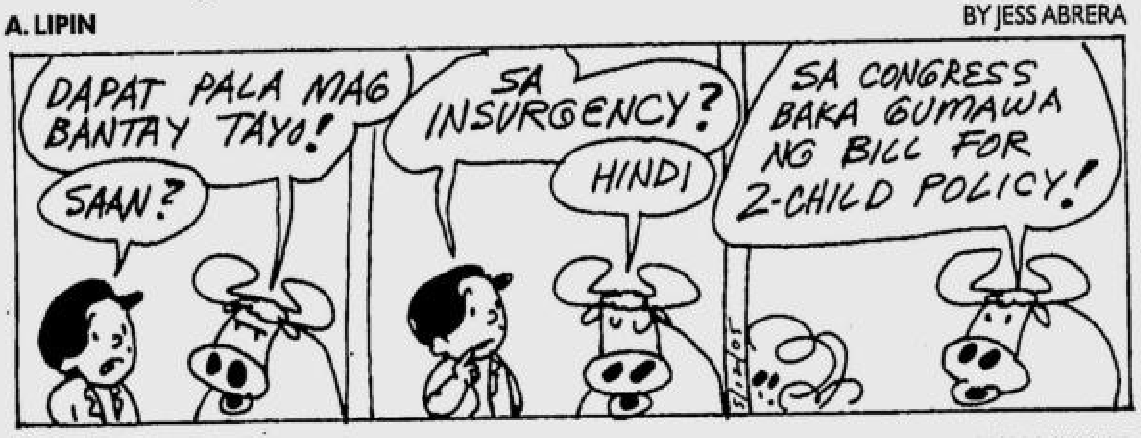
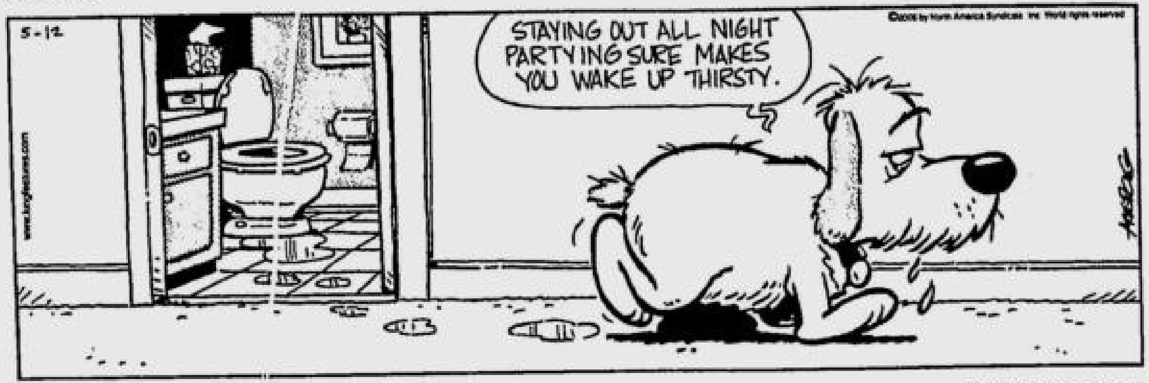
FOXTROT BY BILL AMEND


ARRGH! NOW IT'S STUCK WORSE THAN BEFORE!
MAYBE IF YOU START CRYING, THE TEARS WILL HELP IT SLIP OFF.
DARTH VADER DOESN'T CRY, PETER.
THE GUY WAS MARRIED TO NATALIE PORTMAN AND BLEW IT. I MEAN, THINK ABOUT IT!
5-12
PAIGE, HELP ME GET THIS HELMET OFF.
WHY'S PETER CRYING?

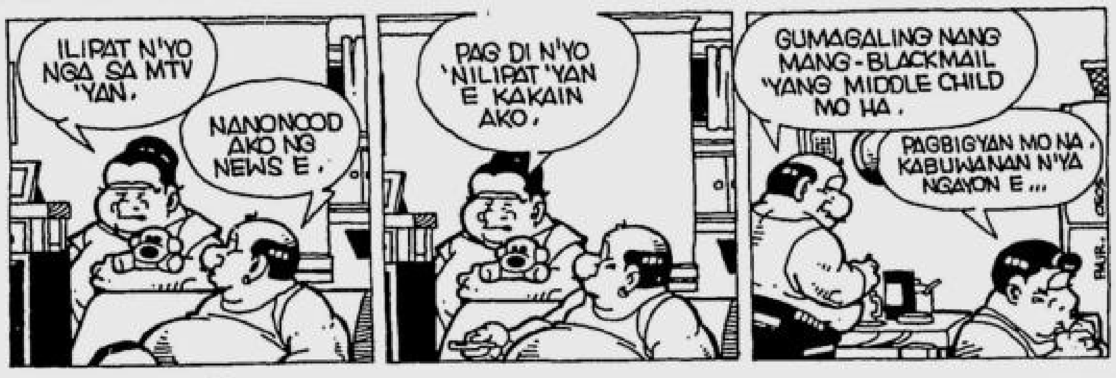
A. LIPIN BY JESS ABRERA


DAPAT PALA MAG BANTAY TAYO!
SAAN?
SA INSURGENCY?
HINDI
SA CONGRESS BAKA GUMAWA NG BILL FOR 2-CHILD POLICY!

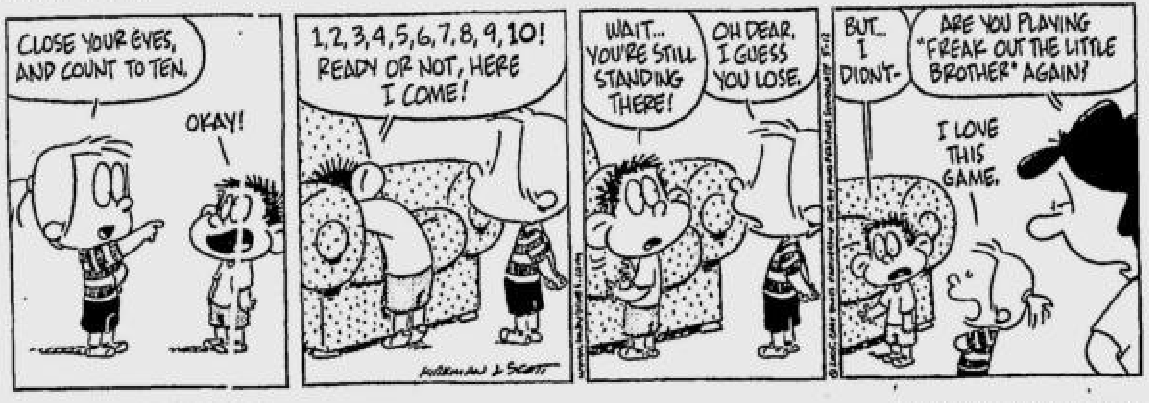
MARVIN BY TOM ARMSTRONG


5-12
STAYING OUT ALL NIGHT PARTYING SURE MAKES YOU WAKE UP THIRSTY.

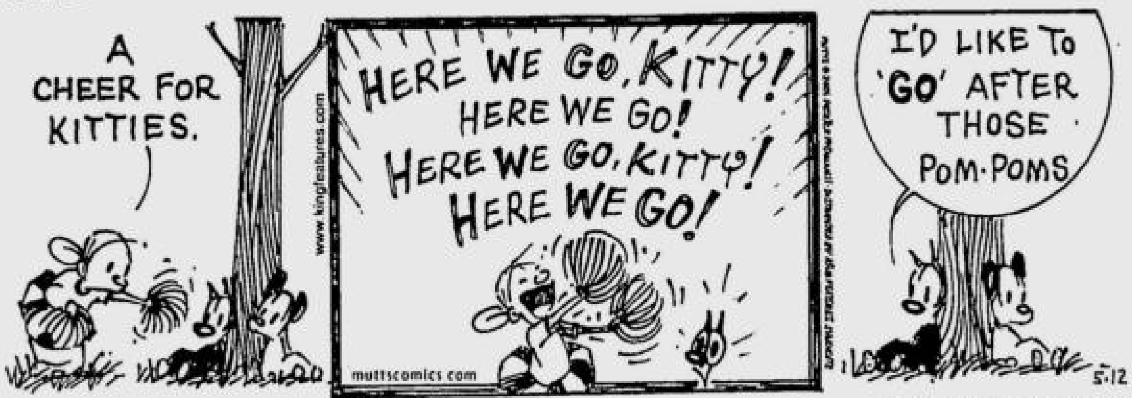
PUGAD BABOY BY P.M. JUNIOR


ILIPAT N'YO NGA SA MTV 'YAN.
NANONOOD AKO NG NEWS E.
PAG DI N'YO 'NILIPAT 'YAN E KAKAIN AKO.
GUMAGALING NANG MANG-BLACKMAIL 'YANG MIDDLE CHILD MO HA.
PAGBIGYAN MO NA. KABUWANAN N'YA NGAYON E...

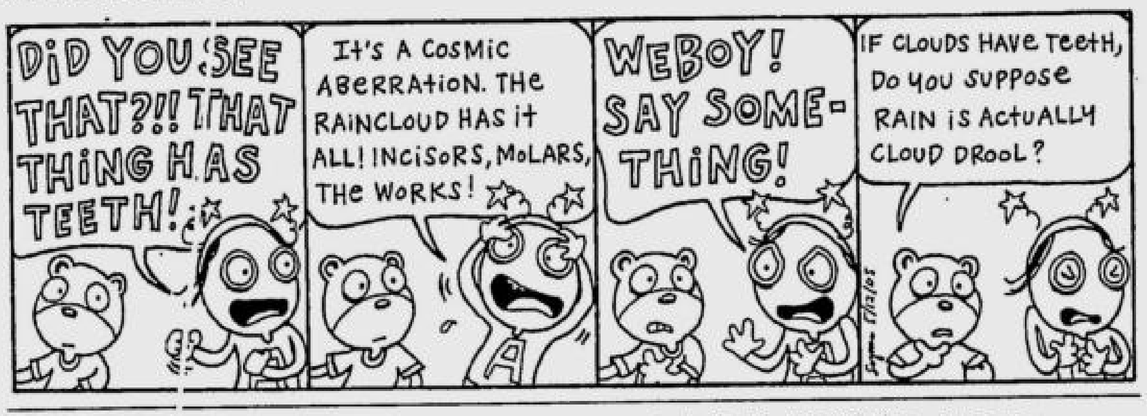
BABY BLUES BY JERRY SCOTT


CLOSE YOUR EYES, AND COUNT TO TEN.
OKAY!
1,2,3,4,5,6,7,8,9,10! READY OR NOT, HERE I COME!
WAIT... YOU'RE STILL STANDING THERE!
OH DEAR. I GUESS YOU LOSE.
BUT... I DIDN'T-
ARE YOU PLAYING "FREAK OUT THE LITTLE BROTHER" AGAIN?
I LOVE THIS GAME.

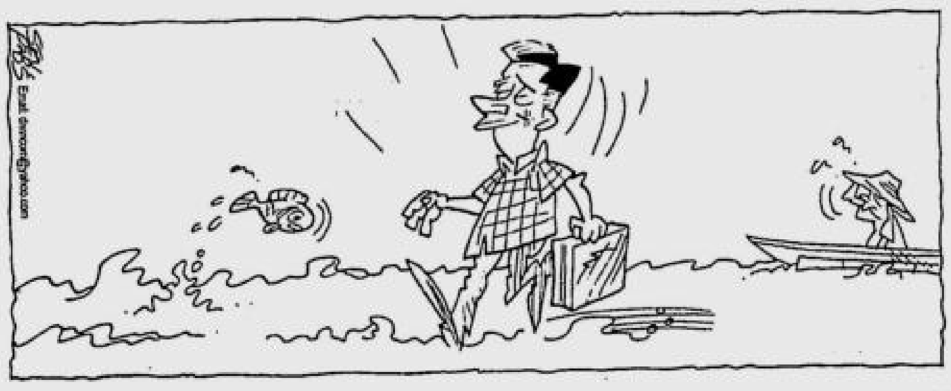
MUTTS BY PATRICK McDONNELL


A CHEER FOR KITTIES.
HERE WE GO, KITTY! HERE WE GO! HERE WE GO, KITTY! HERE WE GO!
muttscomics.com
I'D LIKE TO 'GO' AFTER THOSE POM-POMS
5.12

ATOMO AND WEBOY BY LYRA GARCELLANO

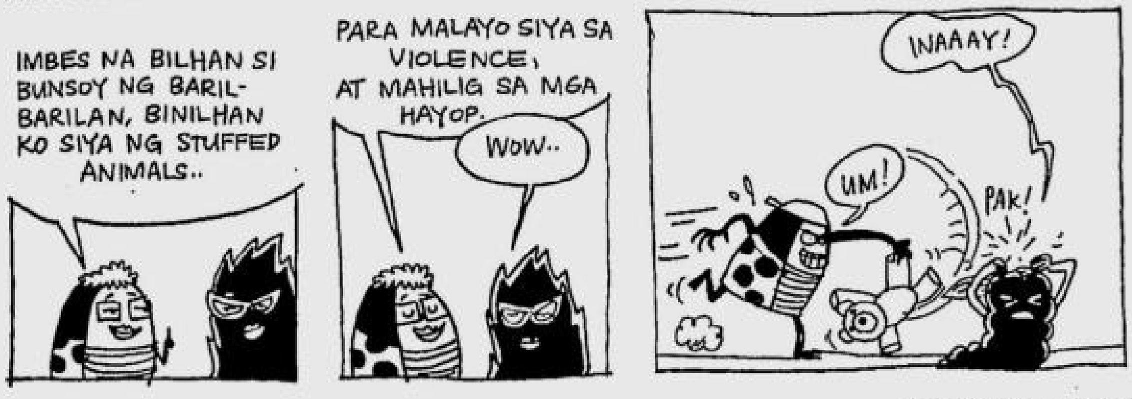

DID YOU SEE THAT?!! THAT THING HAS TEETH!
IT'S A COSMIC ABERRATION. THE RAINCLOUD HAS IT ALL! INCISORS, MOLARS, THE WORKS!
WEBOY! SAY SOMETHING!
IF CLOUDS HAVE TEETH, DO YOU SUPPOSE RAIN IS ACTUALLY CLOUD DROOL?

DIVINE COMEDY BY STEVEN PABALINAS

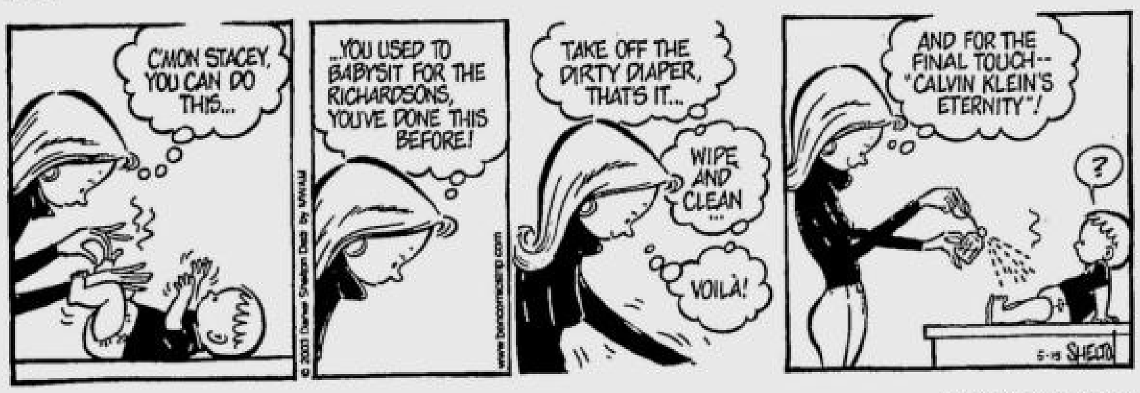


MALAKI ANG NATIPID NI TOTO SA PAMASAHE SA BANGKA ARAW-ARAW SIMULA NANG NATUTO SYANG MAGLAKAD SA TUBIG

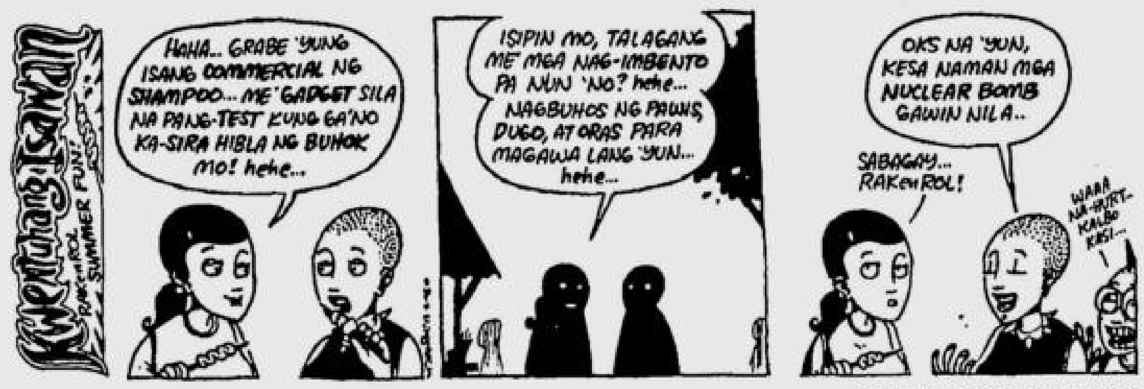
MIKROKOSMOS BY JOMIKE TEJIDO


IMBES NA BILHAN SI BUNSOY NG BARIL-BARILAN, BINILHAN KO SIYA NG STUFFED ANIMALS..
PARA MALAYO SIYA SA VIOLENCE, AT MAHILIG SA MGA HAYOP.
WOW..
INAAAY!
UM!
PAK!

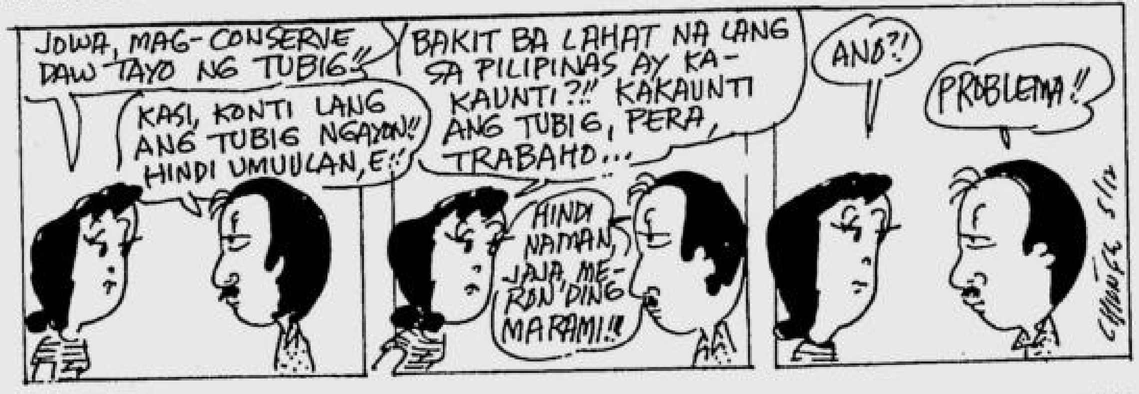
BEN BY DANIEL SHELTON


C'MON STACEY, YOU CAN DO THIS...
...YOU USED TO BABYSIT FOR THE RICHARDSONS, YOU'VE DONE THIS BEFORE!
TAKE OFF THE DIRTY DIAPER, THAT'S IT...
WIPE AND CLEAN ...
VOILÀ!
AND FOR THE FINAL TOUCH-- "CALVIN KLEIN'S ETERNITY"!
?

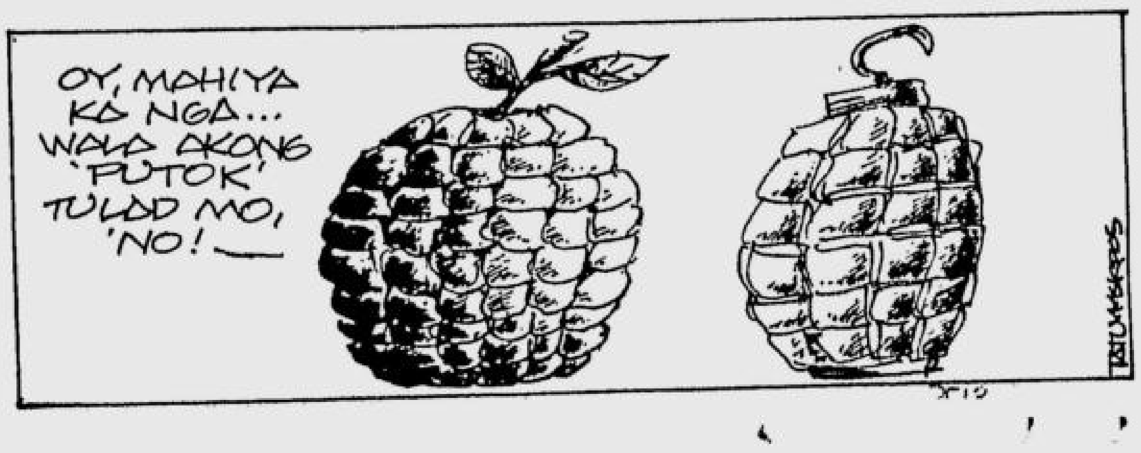
KIKO MACHINE BY MANIX ABRERA


KWENTUHANG ISKWATER RAKenROL SUMMER FUN!
HAHA.. GRABE 'YUNG ISANG COMMERCIAL NG SHAMPOO... ME' GADGET SILA NA PANG-TEST KUNG GA'NO KA-SIRA HIBLA NG BUHOK MO! hehe...
ISIPIN MO, TALAGANG ME' MGA NAG-IMBENTO PA NUN 'NO? hehe... NAGBUHOS NG PAWIS, DUGO, AT ORAS PARA MAGAWA LANG 'YUN... hehe...
OKS NA 'YUN, KESA NAMAN MGA NUCLEAR BOMB GAWIN NILA..
SABAGAY... RAKenROL!
WAAA NA-HURT-KALBO KASI...

LOVEKNOTS BY ELIZABETH CHIONGLO


JOWA, MAG-CONSERVE DAW TAYO NG TUBIG!!
KASI, KONTI LANG ANG TUBIG NGAYON!! HINDI UMUULAN, E!!
BAKIT BA LAHAT NA LANG SA PILIPINAS AY KAKAUNTI?!! KAKAUNTI ANG TUBIG, PERA, TRABAHO...
HINDI NAMAN, JAJA, MERON DING MARAMI!!
ANO?!
PROBLEMA!!

TULDOK BY PAPU AND TATUM MILAMBILING


OY, MAHIYA KA NGA... WALA AKONG 'PUTOK' TULAD MO, 'NO!

HOROSCOPE

BY FRANCIS DRAKE

YOU BORN TODAY: You're talented and mischievous. You enjoy lighthearted pranks. You like to debunk things and prick pompous balloons. You're a natural leader; yet you have no desire to rule over others. You stand out in a crowd. You have intense dedication and drive. The year ahead is social, fun-loving and promotes romance!
Birthdate of: Katharine Hepburn, actress; Tony Hawk, skateboard superstar; Ving Rhames, actor.

ARIES (March 21 to April 19) : You'll be thinking about money issues in the next six weeks. Similarly, you might be giving more thought to buying or selling something.

TAURUS (April 20 to May 20): At the moment, three planets are in your sign: the Sun, Mercury and Venus. This means the entire world is having a Taurus hit. It also means good luck easily comes to you.

GEMINI (May 21 to June 20): By nature you're busy and curious. This makes you multitask and shoot off in various directions at the same time. Right now, however, you should rest!

CANCER (June 21 to July 22): Discussions with friends will assume greater importance in your life in the next few weeks. You have something you want to say. By all means, say it! Get it off your chest.

LEO (July 23 to Aug. 22): The month ahead is an excellent time to talk to bosses, parents, authority figures and anyone who can influence your career favorably.

VIRGO (Aug. 23 to Sept. 22): You have an increasing desire to travel or expand your world in some way. If you have an urge to register for a course or to go back to school, now is the time to do it.

LIBRA (Sept. 23 to Oct. 22): Your ability to research important things gets better in the next few months. You have the patience and the determination to go after whatever you're looking for.

SCORPIO (Oct. 23 to Nov. 21): Today Mercury moves opposite your sign. This gives you a good opportunity (in the next month or so) to have meaningful, productive, two-way discussions with those who are important to you.

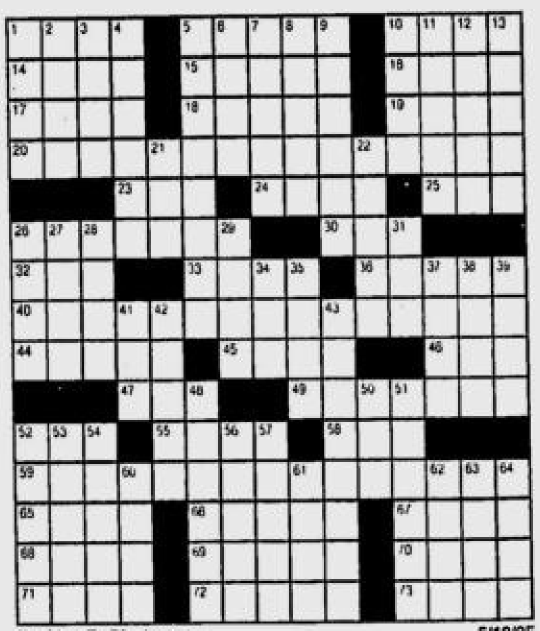
SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22 to Dec. 21): Your ability to handle information and do detailed work (even routine tasks) is excellent right now and in the next few weeks! Tackle those jobs you've been putting off for a while.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22 to Jan. 19): Your creative abilities are sharp now! You also feel playful, prankish and ready for fun! The month ahead is an excellent time for working with children.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20 to Feb. 18): You can make greater headway in the next month doing repairs at home. These can be physical repairs by fixing what is broken; but they can also be repairs to broken relationships.

PISCES (Feb. 19 to March 20): You can expect to be reading, writing, studying and taking more short trips in the month ahead. Your daily tempo definitely is accelerating!

DAILY CROSSWORD



By Alan P. Olschwang
Huntington Beach, CA
5/12/05

ACROSS
1 'Paper Lion' star Alan
5 Splinter groups
10 Cold and clammy
14 Swell!
15 Stan's partner in comedy
16 Clarinet's cousin
17 Like a drumhead
18 Discovered
19 Small fishing boat
20 Start of Saki's simple advice
23 Apr. addressee
24 Japanese wooden-soled shoe
25 TV reporter Koppel
26 Rodin subject
30 Expressions of confusion
32 Scull propeller
33 Droop
36 Leading
40 Part 2 of advice
44 Iron alloy
45 One-and-only
46 Eve's origination?
47 D.C. regular
49 Messengers' business
52 Financing fig.
55 Blunderer's word
58 Links standard
59 End of advice
65 Actor Morales
66 Sacred text of Islam
67 Russian river
68 School period
69 Turn inside out
70 Under the weather
71 Scottish Gaelic
72 Uses a lasso
73 Latin being

DOWN
1 Against
2 Tilt
3 Glob of paint
4 Achieve
5 Low-pressure technique
6 'The Time Machine' race
7 Held tightly
8 Touch of color
9 Calm
10 Extinct bird
11 In the vicinity
12 Scandinavian
13 Attuned
21 Rile
22 Taj __
26 Small fry
27 Poet Crane
28 'Dies __'
29 Theater seating
31 Haggard novel
34 Buddhist Thai
35 Lovett or Talbot
37 Merit
38 Eager
39 Cotillion newbies
41 Ginger
42 Standoffish
43 Slithering hissers
48 Attractive person
50 Collide intentionally
51 Stir up
52 Narrow mountain ridge
53 Knotty problem
54 Serengeti plaints
56 BYU city
57 Throat prob.
60 Act out
61 Fabled also-ran
62 'Exodus' author
63 Pouchlike structures
64 Actress Sommers

Wednesday's Puzzle Solved

Q	U	I	R	T	■	A	B	E	L	■	G	A	P	E
O	S	C	A	R	■	D	O	S	E	■	A	V	E	R
M	E	E	S	E	■	D	U	N	E	■	T	I	T	O
■	■	■	P	L	A	S	T	E	R	B	O	A	R	D
O	B	S	■	L	I	U	■	■	■	A	R	N	I	E
L	I	Q	U	I	D	P	A	P	E	R	■	■	■	■
D	O	U	G	S	■	■	P	E	D	E	S	T	A	L
E	T	A	L	■	A	M	E	N	D	■	H	A	L	E
R	A	D	I	A	T	O	R	■	■	S	A	L	O	N
■	■	■	■	P	L	A	S	T	I	C	W	O	O	D
B	R	A	E	S	■	■	■	A	K	A	■	N	F	L
R	U	B	B	E	R	C	E	M	E	N	T	■	■	■
U	N	D	O	■	E	R	M	A	■	D	O	R	I	S
N	O	U	N	■	B	A	I	L	■	A	T	O	L	L
O	N	L	Y	■	A	B	L	E	■	L	O	W	L	Y

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5/12/05

E-Pass warranty is valid for only a year

THE CONSUMER

Marietta Velasco Giron

WHEN officemates Wendy and Sherwin bought their e-pass units on March 4, 2004, they didn't mind paying P2,800 each, which included a P500 initial load, in exchange for convenience since they traveled daily on South Luzon Expressway.

Now, after one year of use, they found out that the e-passes had become defective. They had to pay for replacements because their warranties had expired.

Sherwin decided to buy a new e-pass. Wendy, on the other hand, complained to the customer service office of Philippine National Construction Corporation Skyway Corporation, raising the possibility that the units had factory defects. She also requested the company's chief of operations to reconsider the warranty rules by replacing her e-pass at no cost.

In her e-mail to us, she commented, "I found it strange that two units bought on the same day would become defective a few days apart following expiration of the warranties. How come my other friends are still using their e-pass units (with no glitches) for more than two years?"

Wendy forwarded to us PNCC's reply to her request.

"We understand your frustration on your unit not having been replaced due to the expiration of the one-year warranty… However, we have an audit control system integrated with the activation of the said tag that automatically qualifies if the warranty of the unit expires. The manufacturer of the said unit would charge our company if we do an unauthorized replacement of any unit. Therefore, we could not grant your request."

Overpriced

R. Braganza is calling the attention of the authorities to the overpricing of documentary stamps at the ground floor of the Professional Regulation Commission (PRC) office in Manila.

He wrote: "Several windows at the ground floor of PRC are selling documentary stamps for a price more than what is indicated on the stamps. I was a victim and, when I asked for an explanation, I was told that the extra charge went to a cooperative… Why does the public have to pay to support the cooperative? Is there a law which allows this?"

We asked the PRC administrative office for an explanation and was told that the extra P2 added to the price of documentary and mailing stamps supported the following: salaries of the hired staff that operated the five stamp machines; purchase of ink for machines (ink lasts 2-4 days, cost is P1,400 per machine); and expenses for operations and maintenance.

The spokesperson further explained that there was a sign at the PRC ground floor that was self explanatory. The sign says, "For every mailing/documentary stamp, there is an allowable mark-up of P2 each (as) payment for the ink used for the metering machines and salaries of tellers hired by the customer service center, which is jointly operated by the PRC Cooperative and Savings and Loans Association and the accredited employees association of the commission.

"The metering machines were resorted (to) due to the proliferation of fake and overpriced mailing/documentary stamp that prejudice/delay processing of official documents."

Praises

A reader, e-mail address lindab@wave.com.ph, would like to commend Masagana Gas Service & Appliances at 1676 A Linao St., Paco, Manila for its efficient service.

As the reader's household prepared lunch, the LPG tank they were using suddenly went empty. But their stove's regulator would not fit into the spare tank they had to put all their cooking on hold.

Called for assistance, Masagana promptly dispatched somebody who showed up already with another spare. Upon verifying that the tank in question was defective, he quickly replaced it with the one he brought.

All this prompt and efficient service on a Sunday when the store was open only until noon and most of its people were off.

Pensions suspended

The Social Security System has suspended 78,000 more pensions as it verifies the status of their recipients. This brings to 83,000 suspended accounts, according to SSS president and chief executive officer Corazon de la Paz.

She said pensions would be restored as soon as affected members reported to the SSS, or responded to letters sent by the institution. They can also send certifications of existence issued by the following: a regular SSS employee who has been with the institution for at least five years; a teller in the bank where pensioner has an account, or the local postman or barangay chair.

BANANA Leaf, a Hong Kong-style café, serves Asian fusion dishes.

ICEBERGS does not only serve halo-halo but also other merienda items.

KWANGTONG offers reasonably priced set menus.

One-stop place for international cuisine

AYALA Center's Glorietta offers a wide variety of food choices from all parts of the world at the most reasonable prices.

At Glorietta 4, one can enjoy authentic Cantonese cuisine at Kwangtong, which offers reasonably priced set menus for three to 12 persons.

The more contemporary Modern China also at Glorietta 4 serves Shanghai and Beijing cuisine, with a bit of western influence.

For Chinese casual dining, with over 200 dishes to choose from, there is Tang City at Glorietta 3. It serves dishes from eight regions of China known for their cuisine.

Japanese cuisine is represented by Kitaro, a popular name among sushi lovers, that reopened recently at Glorietta 4. Glorietta 2's restaurant row also has places that offer Rai Rai Ken Ramen and sushi.

Enjoy Asian fusion in a Hong Kong-style café, the Banana Leaf Asian Café.

Uncle Joe serves good ole American burgers, pies, chicken wings and french fries. Chef d'Angelo at Glorietta 2 serves all-time favorite pasta and pizza and classic American dishes.

Indulge a sweet tooth at Wetzel's Pretzels at Glorietta 3. Just a few steps from it is Gloria Jean's that serves freshly brewed gourmet coffee.

Glorietta 2's restaurant row includes Iceberg with its Halo-Halo.

Other food options in Glorietta are El Cuento, Don Henrico's, Outback Steakhouse, Tony Roma's, Superbowl of China, Kaya Restaurant, Bacolod Chicken Inasal, Max's, Gilligan's Island, W Grill, Osake, North Park, Dencio's, California Pizza Kitchen, Cabalen, Zen and Teriyaki Boy.

MODERN China serves Shanghai and Beijing cuisine, with a bit of western influence.

CHEF d'Angelo serves all-time favorite pasta and pizza.

TANG City serves dishes from eight regions of China.

FOOD and fun. Food Central not only offers a wide array of foods but has also become a venue for mini shows.

DINING in style. With more food outlets, bright and modern interior, Food Central has become a popular dining destination.

Shopping destination is also a foodies' mecca

THE EDSA Central at Greenfield District in Mandaluyong is now more than just a shopping mecca. It has also become a favorite destination of food lovers.

JJ Montinola, Edsa Central lease marketing manager, said Food Central offered value dining. Occupying a 3,000-sq.m. space on the 2/L of the mall, the food court seats more than 900 people and has 14 establishments.

Among Food Central's tenants are

Boy Binalot, which offers Pinoy favorites like *bangus, tapa, adobo* and *longanisa* wrapped in banana leaves with salted egg, tomatoes and fried rice. Barbecues and *merienda* treats will be added to the menu soon.

Toto's Lechon Manok serves chicken and liempo, set meals of pork tonkatsu or fried chicken, rice and soup. It may soon offer catering and delivery services.

Grill Palace has a wide array of dishes like hot-off-the-grill *liempo* and barbecue, as well as *sinigang, dinuguan* and steak, and budget-friendly rice toppings of chicken, pork and beef teriyaki. It will soon serve *lechon baboy*.

Other stalls include Ka Precy Lutong Bahay, Channel of Food Cuisine, Sizzling Steakhouse, Stir Crazy Cuisine, Sonyda Ichiban, Chapati Express, Mongkok Express, Burger King and Dunkin Donuts.

To draw more people, Food Central has also become a venue for mini-concerts, "Musical Menu." Regular diners can also bring home freebies during weekly raffles.

FEAST and frolic. Kids can spend hours at the play station when they and their families dine at the Food Central. Customers also have a chance to bring home exciting freebies in weekly raffles.

INTERIORS of Grappa's

Italian dining by the bay

GRAPPA'S recently opened its newest restaurant at Brittany Bay. The addition of the popular Italian restaurant to the growing list of outlets in the area further strengthens Brittany Bay's position as the "next destination" for dining leisure and fun get-togethers.

Maverick property developer Brittany Corporation has been leading this endeavor through its successful master-planned themed neighborhoods in the area.

"We take great pains to provide people with a well-rounded experience through the commercial areas we develop to complement our neighborhoods," says Jing Serrano, president of Brittany Corporation.

Grappa's is a specialty Italian restaurant known for its home-style Italian recipes, wood-fired oven-baked pizza, homemade pasta and sauces, freshly brewed Caffe Apassionato coffee varieties, and a relaxing bar with its signature micro-brewed Pivo Praha (Czech for "own beer"), cocktails and a wide selection of wines. The resto has a 10-page drink list selection for connoisseurs to explore.

Along with the relaxed upscale interiors and personalized service, Grappa's also enjoys the grand view of the Laguna de Bay that all of Brittany Bay's properties are blessed with. With its prime location, Grappa's offers an outdoor dining experience where you can enjoy the fresh bay breeze.

"The locale is perfect for Grappa's," says operations manager Tony Mingo. "Our discriminating patrons—business people, yuppies, expatriates and their families—who have been enjoying our food and service will surely enjoy the ambiance here, both indoors and al fresco. Plus, we have ample parking space."

Aside from a brimming menu of antipasti, insalata, zuppe, pasta, pizza, risotti, entrees and dolci, Grappa's also offers a generous buffet lunch and dinner, with around 40 choices at only P595+ and P650+, respectively. Of course, the buffet includes the all-time-favorite Oyster Rockefeller.

Bestsellers include Prosciutto Mango, Carpaccio Di Bue Livorno, Fettuccine con Gamberetti e Funghi, Gnocchi di Patate Al Formagi, Spaghetti Alle Vongole, Pizza Alla Salsiccia, Pollo Boscaiola, decadent Tiramisu and the famous Pizza Bravo.

Completing the potent La Posada mix is the highly popular Filipino cuisine of Dencio's Bar and Grill and the convivial ambiance of Figaro coffee shop.

Also recently launched was Bay Centre for Music and the Arts, located below the popular Dencio's. The Centre offers classes for music, ballet, jazz and painting.

Brittany Bay, the flagship project of Brittany Corporation, is a master-planned themed community of neighborhoods inspired by the postcard-pretty San Francisco and developed in the communities of La Posada, Victorianne, Presidio and Viera.

Bound by Bicutan and Sucat interchanges, Brittany Bay is a 15-minute drive from Makati via the South Luzon Expressway, and 20 minutes from Ortigas via the C5 highway.

ICE CREAM Nestlé Scoop-a-trip*
MONDE SELECTION 2004 GOLD QUALITY AWARD BRUSSELS, BELGIUM
CONGRATULATIONS to the WINNERS!

ICE CREAM Nestlé Scoop-a-trip
Scoop the world-class ice cream and look for the winning chip!
Nestlé ACCOUNT NO 00138-00882-0 R/T No. 01029 03902
PAY TO THE ORDER OF MS. ARNILDA HERNANDEZ
WINNER OF TRIP TO JAPAN FOR FOUR
Scoop-a-trip
NESTLE PHILIPPINES INC. ICE CREAM DIVISION
WENNIFER CHAN
"0000098718"'01029"'0392:0013800008020"'

Winner of Trip to JAPAN
Arnilda Hernandez, Muntinlupa City
Winner of Trip to the USA
Luz Amaneo, Marikina City

Hurry! Buy now! More prizes to be won!
Promo period: March 1 - May 31, 2005

List of winners as of end April 2005

Canon Digital Camera Winners
Norman Amora, Makati City
Domingo E. Navato, Kamias, Quezon City
Aileen M. Chan, Quezon City
Christopher D. Guinto, Caloocan City
Eduardo A. De Jesus Jr., Valenzuela, M. M.
Omar S. Malit, Quezon City
Roy Puno Vergara, Quezon City
Ronald T. Laguerta, Biñan, Laguna
Mary Jane S. Cabantac, Sampaloc, Manila
Geraldine Dino, Digos City
Cesar A. Aguila, Davao City
Leonida T. Malano, Davao City
Fortunato L. Dahiroc, Tagum City
Rosemarie D. Pilar, San Juan, M.M.
Aljela B. Gabrinao, Las Piñas City
Pelagio N. Siljavan, Jr., Cagayan de Oro City
Evan Anthony De La Rosa, San Juan, M.M.
Alexander B. Dona, Malate, Manila
Rommel R. Tindogan, Imus, Cavite
Roycelyn Tomagtang, La Castellana, Neg. Occ.
Divina Gracia Salas, Cubao, Q. C.
Melita A. Capones, Port Area, Manila
Angelina Martinez, Cagayan de Oro City
HanJin Yang, Seoul, Korea
Marilyn C. Dacasin, Parañaque City
Joe Chua, Davao City
Corazon Meylem, Cauayan, Isabela
Ronaldo Adina, Ilocos Norte
Mirasol M. Gupiteo, Manduriao, Iloilo City
Cynthia Leonor, Cebu City

Samsonite Luggage Bag Winners
Arlene A. Jacinto, Pasig City
Judith J. Evaristo, Makati City
Gemma M. Jimenez, Cagayan de Oro City
Miesel B. Daquera, New Manila, Q. C.
Asther T. Calmato, Bacoor, Cavite
Raymundo T. Sombillo, Bicutan, Taguig City
Tanya Sales, Cubao, Q. C.
Chale Baldemor, Caloocan City
Salvador E. Vitalicio, Cavite
Virginia Lagura, Mandaue City

Nokia 7260 Cellphone Winners
Diomedes Capangpangan, Caloocan City
Donovan S. Estrellado, Sta. Cruz, Manila
Joewell S. Barnachea, Caloocan City
Frida S. San Jose, Taguig City
Josefina Q. Cortez, Morong, Rizal
Jose P. Labrillazo, Lapu-Lapu City
Adele Muntuerto, Cebu City
Roel M. M. Baylosis, Dasmariñas, Cavite
Anna Liezel Hapita, Antipolo City
Kristine Enriquez, Mandaue City
Aurora A. Valentos, Taytay, Rizal
Ronnie Villa, Meycauayan, Bulacan
Ronaldo Visca, Quezon City
Gaylord R. Lachica, Las Piñas City
Rosemarie Galfo, Cubao, Quezon City
Ardiano F. Palatis, Jr., Cagayan de Oro City
Gemma Basoc, Davao City
Shirley Salazar, Tondo, Manila
Marites M. Abay, Mandaluyong City
Gina P. Junsay, Pasig City
Michael Z. Gloriane, Pasig City
Ludivina G. Mabaylan, Cagayan de Oro City
Rogelio C. Cordial, Silang, Cavite
Millet G. De Guia, Pasig City
Jose Eduardo M. Apiado, Las Piñas City
Mary Jo Manuel, Muntinlupa City
Ma. Celeste M. Juan, Las Piñas City
Marisol I. del Socorro, Cubao, Quezon City
Benjamin A. Ison Jr., Pasig City
Oscar Sia, Davao City
Alice Sicat, San Fernado, Pampanga
Emilinda Marino, Cebu City

02 XDA II Phone Winners
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LIFESTYLE

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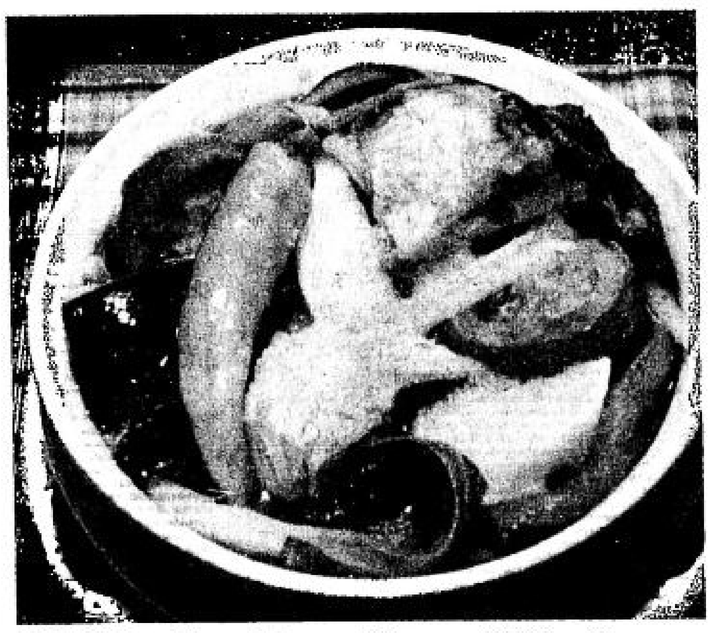
FRESH oysters from Alaminos

Lola Maria serves a hearty and popular mix of Filipino, regional and international dishes



SINIGANG na Ulo ng Salmon sa Miso

All the goodness of grandma's cooking

Text by Alex Y. Vergara
Photos by Joseph Agcaoili

BEFORE fast-food chains and ready-to-eat meals became popular, families who wanted a change from home-cooked food went to full-fledged restaurants where they were given menus and served at the tables.

Instead of predictable and fattening fare, most of the eating places—from the lowly panciteria to the pricey fine-dining restaurant—offered customers more varied selections.

People behind Lola Maria, the coffee shop of the Legend Villas in Mandaluyong (tel. 6331501 to 10), seek to revive the days when eating out meant more than lining up at the counter, choosing a value meal and deciding whether or not to upsize the drink and French fries.

"The popularity of fast food is a direct result of the times," says Patrick Favoreal, the Legend Villas' senior assistant vice president. "Apart from the many things parents have to attend to at home and in the office, they have to contend with the traffic."

Many families neither have the time nor the energy to cook. Going to fast-food restaurants is the easiest and cheapest way for families to eat together.

Better alternative

Lola Maria aims to provide them with a much better if a bit more expensive alternative for breakfast, lunch and dinner.

The coffee shop, named after Maria Villanueva Rosario, the late maternal grandmother of Wyden King, chair of Legend Hotels International Corp., serves a hearty and popular mix of Filipino, regional and international dishes loaded with home-cooked goodness reminiscent of, yes, grandmother's (and mother's) cooking.

Although Rosario, a genuine Ilocana from Vigan, didn't have time to cook regularly because of numerous businesses she had to attend to, she loved to provide her family with nutritious and delicious meals. During her twilight years, she organized family reunions, regarding those events as important in sustaining family ties.

KALBI Chim

Even the restaurant's interiors, with traces of the Ilocanos' *bahay na bato* in a less formal setting, is a throwback to the romantic past. The dining area, which seats 114 people, is probably the closest many people can get to eating a meal in a big house in Vigan.

Choices

The place offers corporate types on weekdays and families on weekends a choice between buffet and a la carte dishes.

Among Rosario's favorites, which have found their way in the coffee shop, are Lechon Kawali (served with *pinakbet*), Ox Tail Kare-Kare, Bistek Tagalog, Embutidong Bangus, Rum Chicken Palmera and Crispy Pata.

Apart from Sinigang na Ulo ng Salmon sa Miso, another of Rosario's favorites, soup lovers have two ways to enjoy zesty *sinigang*, either with juicy pork ribs and *gabi* (taro) or the tender *bangus* belly. The soup list also includes Pancit Molo and Nilagang Pata at Bias

ALL/E2

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NASI Mañaman

BRUSCHETTA

All the goodness of grandma's cooking

FRANCIS Favoreal and Ginger King-Villanueva of the Legend Villas

From page E1

ng Baka. The Kinilaw na Tanigue and Crispy Pork Sisig are but two of the appetizers.

Foreign but familiar dishes such as Prawns Thermidor, Ebi Tempura, Kalbi Chim and Grilled Tenderloin Steak are also on the menu. For those who would rather not make a choice, Lola Maria also serves a daily lunch buffet with a particular theme. It also has a noodle station with a wide range of *pancit*—from *palabok* to *bihon, sotanghon* to canton.

Oysters day

Filipino chef Rudy Catacutan of Pampanga and his team have set aside Thursdays for oysters. Lola Maria gets its fresh supply of seafood from Alaminos, Pangasinan, where the King family also owns and manages a modern wet market called Suki (it has branches in San Pedro, Laguna and Dapitan Street in Quezon City). You can relish the oysters either fresh, *kinilaw*-style or baked as Oyster Rockefeller.

"Some of these dishes have already been our bestsellers," says Ginger King-Villanueva, the Legend Villas general manager. "Home-style cooking has always been our (forte) even before we decided to beef up Lola Maria's menu."

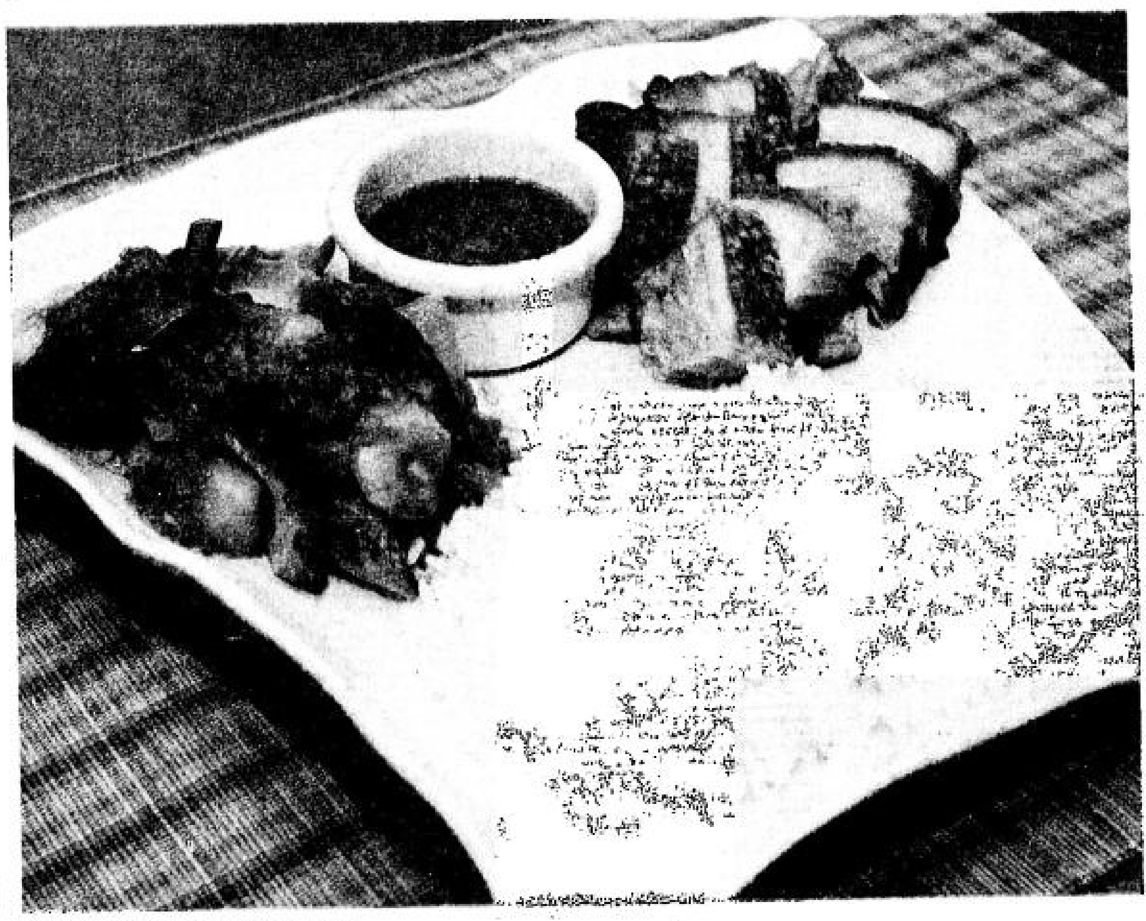
King-Villanueva has been on top of the Legend Villas' renovation from a nondescript business hotel to a premium property consisting of suites and rooms. The Legend Villas currently has 23 "villa" suites with one or two bedrooms.

In keeping with its thrust to promote traditional family fare, Lola Maria's list of *merienda* items is composed mainly of comfort foods that invariably bring back memories of one's childhood. Mami at Siopitas, Arroz Caldo at Tokwa't Baboy, and Dinuguan at Puto are offered along with Seafood Alfredo, Spaghetti and various noodles.

"I'm not a heavy eater," King-Villanueva says, "but I can hardly resist our *arroz caldo*. I find it tasty as well as soothing."

The kitchen has also come up with innovative dishes that fuse native as well as regional inspirations. The Nasi Mañaman, fried rice cooked the Indonesian way and served with two sticks of chicken barbecue and fried egg, has Capampangan nuances only a *cabalen* like Catacutan can whip up.

E-mail the author at avergara@inquirer.com.ph



LECHON Kawali with Pinakbet

GAMBAS

Two recipes from 'lola'

Nasi Mañaman

2 tbsp oil
1 ½ c rice
10 g onions
5 g garlic
20 g beef tenderloin, strip
20 g shrimp, peeled
20 g chicken strips
2 g chili finger, green, sliced
1 1/3 tbsp Knorr seasoning
50 g *pechay* Baguio
3 g celery
2 g leeks
2 pcs chicken *sate*
1 pc egg, sunny side up

***Boiled chicken breast** (chicken cut into strips)
900 g chicken meat
200 g tamarind fruit
4 c water
1 tbsp salt

****Chicken sate**
Chicken de-boned, cut into 1x1
¾ c peanut butter
¼ c Knorr seasoning
1/3 c sugar
½ tsp salt
½ tsp pepper
1 c chicken stock

For boiled chicken meat, cut into strips.

Combine all ingredients and boil for 15 minutes. Drain. Refrigerate after portioning.

Sauté garlic and onion. Add chicken, beef and shrimps. Stir for half a minute. Add half of Knorr seasoning. Add rice and *pechay*. Stir.

Add the other half of Knorr seasoning and add the chili at the last half minute.

Serve with chicken *sate* on the side. Top with the sunny side up egg. Sprinkle with chopped spring onions. Serve with *kropek* on the side.

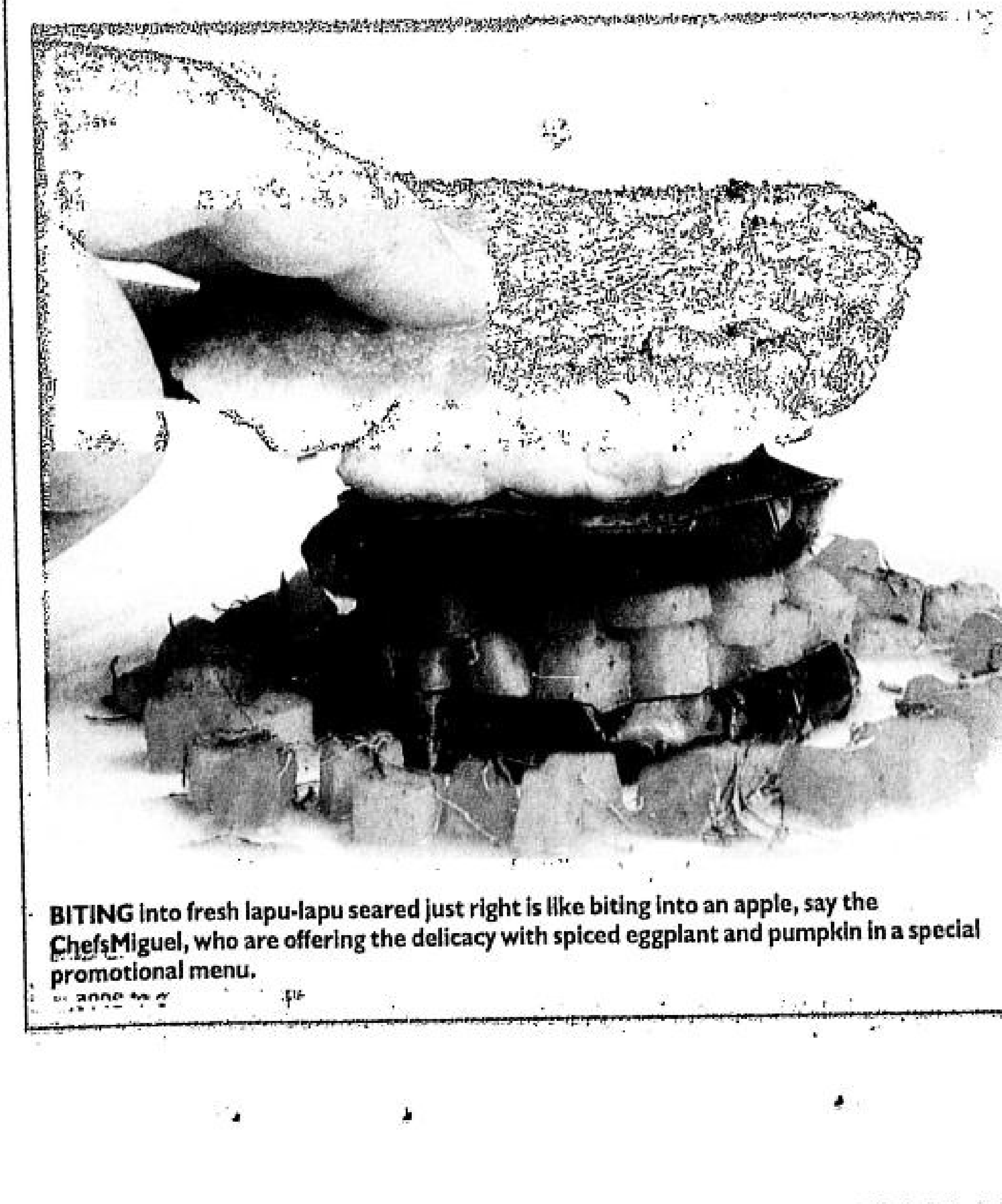
Sinigang na Ulo ng Salmon sa Miso

200 g salmon head
50 g onion
7 g ginger
100 g tomato
1 ½ tbsp fish sauce
60 g *bok choy*
1 pc each chili pepper, red and green
90 g *miso*
4 c water
2 g chicken broth, to taste

Sauté ginger and onion. Add *miso*, fish sauce and chicken broth. Add water and boil. Drop the tomato and salmon, boil until tender.

Add the *sinigang* broth and boil for another 2 minutes. Add the mustard just before serving.

Brothers are tandem for intimate dinners



BITING into fresh lapu-lapu seared just right is like biting into an apple, say the ChefsMiguel, who are offering the delicacy with spiced eggplant and pumpkin in a special promotional menu.

IN THE TOP-END Sydney restaurant circuit, the red Señorita Lapu-lapu is what Chilean Sea Bass is to Metro Manila dining circles—a highly priced delicacy.

According to chefs Anton and Carlo Miguel, who worked side by side with a number of well-known chefs in the highly competitive Australian capital, the Señorita sells for as much as P1,200 to P1,500 per kilo or Au$30 to $38 when it is available. When very fresh corral trout (as the red *lapu-lapu* is also known) is filleted, then pan-fried in olive oil so the skin side is very crisp but the flesh remains firm and just cooked through—it is "awesome," says Anton, the older of the two brothers who also worked in London.

The chefs, who were born in the Philippines, serve the fish with spiced pumpkin and eggplant in a special promotional menu.

Collectively known as ChefsMiguel, the brothers have been cooking intimate dinners for a select list of Metro Manila clients.

The brothers prepare the meals right in the homes of their patrons.

Offering the quality of a Michelin-rated restaurant without many of the usual overheads, they seek to acquaint local diners with more Philippine ingredients that they believe would make it to the world stage if prepared to international culinary standards. (A Michelin star is the highest accolade that can be accorded a restaurant that hews to international standards.)

They lament that most Filipino diners equate a first-class meal with imported steak and ingredients in vogue like frozen Norwegian salmon, Maine lobsters and Chilean sea bass.

But why settle for frozen seafood and meats—which lose their texture—when there are so many other better ingredients in the market, both say.

Categorized as personal chefs, the brothers believe that a great meal always begins with the freshest ingredients. They are enamored with Philippine mango and guyabano, which they prepare in delightful ways.

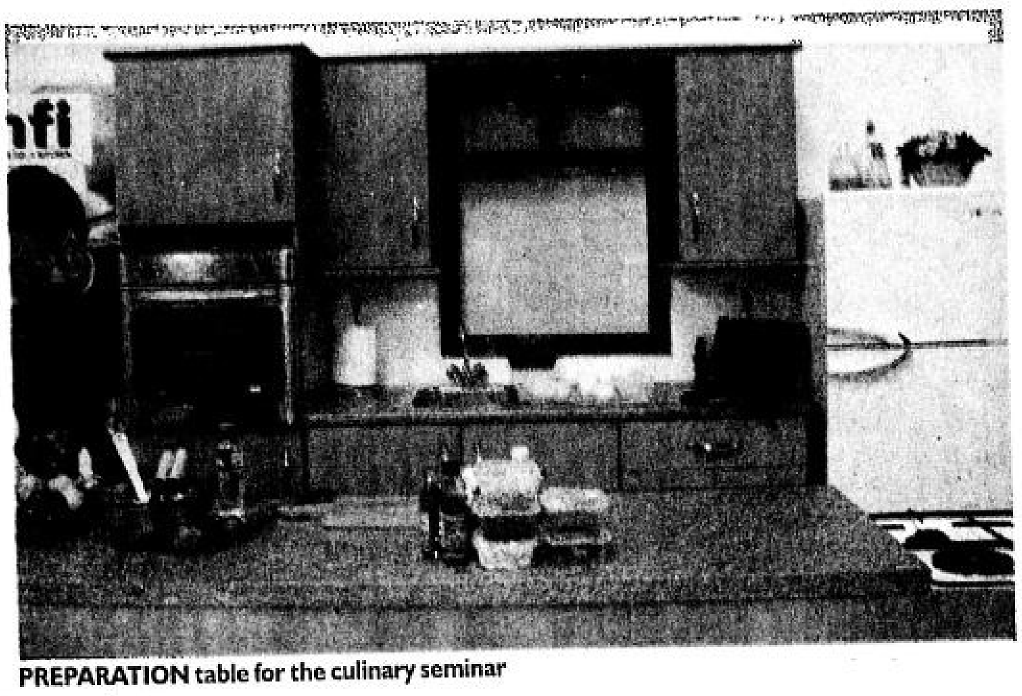
One of their more requested appetizers, for instance, is Seared Prawns with Mango Salsa and Coriander topped with a fragrant vanilla dressing. Somehow the flavor of prawns practically bursts in the mouth when combined with the freshness of the mango and the coriander, and the velvety smoothness of the vanilla sauce.

In addition to prawns, they believe that local lobsters—even without the big pincers of its Maine cousin—are excellent and "about as good as you can get in any great market." Same goes for the *apahap*, *maya-maya* and tuna. Eating fresh seafood is almost like biting into an apple, observes Anton. "You can feel the crunchy protein as it breaks up in your mouth."

In the hands of the brothers, Philippine pork likewise offers new flavor experiences. "Local pork just tastes so much better than those in Australia and the US," says Carlo. The brothers' version of Crispy Pata includes melt-in-the-mouth pork meat slow-cooked in wine, vinegar and beef stock encased in skin roasted to perfection.

A Prawn and Scallop Risotto, Oxtail Ravioli and Crisp Skin Pork Belly with Herbed Spaetzel and Caramelized Apple are among the dishes offered by the ChefsMiguel in a special promotional menu that they will serve only up to the end of July.

For more details, write to chefsmiguel@yahoo.com



PREPARATION table for the culinary seminar

Workshop held in model kitchen

JUNDY Gueco

FOOD Magazine held recently a culinary workshop at the MFI functional kitchen of one-stop home-building superstore Federal Hardware.

Jundy Gueco, a consultant for Red Crab and Red Ribbon, gave a cooking seminar on "Cooking In Under 30 Minutes."

Putting to good use the sleek new functional kitchen of MFI, Europe's No. 1 integrated kitchen retailer and manufacturer, Gueco demonstrated to the audience how to prepare Vegetable Adobo Rice and Grilled Shrimp Salad.

The MFI kitchen showroom is located in the Federal Design Expo next to Federal Hardware, which carries a wide range of high-quality and elegant furniture and accessories to meet the different needs of homeowners.

Federal Design Expo is located at 2250 Don Chino Roces Ave., Makati City. Call 8936553/8936589.

Special edition can promotes musical comedy

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The hilarious take on the legend of King Arthur was presented recently at Broadway's Shubert Theater.

Like the original "Camelot," "Spamalot" was the story of the King and his Knights of the Round Table and their quest for the Holy Grail. It was based on the British comedy film, "Monty Python and the Holy Grail."

Hormel special edition Spam can featured graphics and characters from the musical. It was sold in select New York City retailers and the Shubert Theater.

Eric Idle was the lyricist and bookwriter of "Spamalot." The play, directed by Mike Nichols, starred David Hyde Pierce, Tim Curry and Hank Azaria.

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PRODUCTION DESIGN - GINO GONZALES LIGHTING DESIGN - JOHN BATALLA
MUSICAL DIRECTION - RONY FORTICH CHOREOGRAPHY - DENISA REYES DIRECTION-BART GUINGONA

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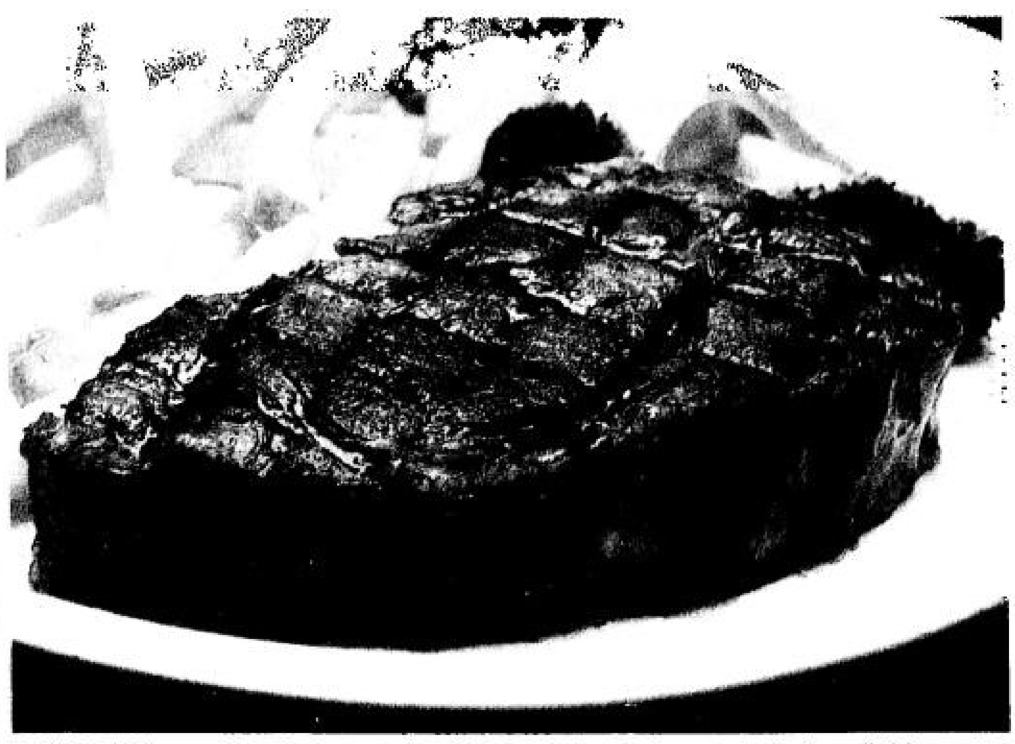

OUTBACK Restaurant offers the Outback Prime Rib, a 12-ounce Angus prime rib (slow-roasted and grilled over an open flame). The Outback Prime Rib and eight-ounce Angus Fillet are the resto's most popular picks. Other bestsellers are Aussie-Tizers, Down Under Favorites, Grilled on the Barbie and Land Rovers. Outback is located at Glorietta 4, Libis and Alabang Town Center.

Feast on summer treats

DINING OUT

MANILA Diamond Hotel's Palm Court Cafe presents an all-you-can-eat seafood dinner featuring Tiger Shrimp Cocktail, Fresh Oysters, Lobster Terrine, Bouillabaisse Marseillaise, Shrimp Tempura, Roasted Gindara and Baked Whole Salmon. Children 6-10 years old get a 50 percent discount and kids 5 years old and below dine for free. Call 5283000.

THE PENINSULA Manila's Exclusivites features "Mangia! Delicious Italy" until June 2. There are sandwiches, pastas, cakes and pastries, legs of Parma ham, parmigiano, wines, salami and vinegars. Call 8872888/ 8875747.

THE WESTIN Philippine Plaza's Cafe Plaza offers two complimentary glasses of Champagne for every bowl of strawberries that you order. A gelato cart roams at the Poolside on weekends. Have snacks at Sunset Bar or Treasure Island or enjoyed grilled specialties at Poolside Barbeque. Call 5515555.

THE RICHMONDE Hotel's Exchange Bar offers a Loyalty Card to all guests who place their orders between 8 p.m. and 12 mn. The card will entitle them to rewards such as wines, free buffet lunches at Richmonde Grill and complimentary overnight accommodations in a Superior Room. For a minimum food and beverage order worth P300, patrons earn one stamp upon presentation of their loyalty card. Rewards can be redeemed when at least 10 stamps are earned. The promo is not applicable during Happy Hour, 5-8 p.m., and is not valid in conjunction with other promos. Call 6387777.

DUSIT Hotel Nikko's Benjarong Royal Thai restaurant presents set menus, which consist of appetizer, salad, soup, main dish and dessert, until May 31. Halo-Halo Fiesta is ongoing until May 31 at the hotel's Lobby Lounge. Indulge in this dessert offering from 2-6 p.m. Sample Blueberry Hazelnut Cheesecake at Deli Shop and Summer Lovin' drink until May 31. Call 8673333.

Gift certificates, discounts in raffle

CALIFORNIA Pizza Kitchen (CPK) has an ongoing promo until May 15. For a minimum dine-in purchase of P500, moms can join the raffle promo and win gift certificates, discount coupons and freebies from Fitness First, Clarity Aesthetic and Laser Center, Urban Spa, JF Lazartigue and Cinderella. CPK offers pizza flavors like Jamaican Jerk Chicken, Vegetarian with Japanese Eggplant and Wild Mushroom; pastas like Jambalaya, Kung Pao and Marinara; and salads like Original BBQ Chicken Chopped, Tuna and Greens and Asian Chicken. Call CPK Glorietta 3 at 8939898/9999; Alabang Town Center at 8506752/5782; Edsa Shangri-La at 6877841/7842; and Tomas Morato at 3727371/7372.

CPK BBQ Chicken Chopped Salad